

THE UK'S BIGGEST REGIONAL GAY LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

# ZONE

MIDLANDS EDITION

ISSUE 225 JANUARY 2016

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THE NEPHEW OF  
HARVEY MILK TALKS  
LGBT HISTORY

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MUSICAL'S DIRECTOR  
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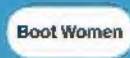
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Doing the time warp with  
**Diana Vickers**



Diana Vickers became a household name back in 2008 when she appeared in hit ITV1 talent show *The X Factor*. After making the semi-finals, Vickers released a number one debut single and album before taking to the West End stage in *The Rise And Fall Of Little Voice*. Since then, she's been expanding her career in acting, both on stage and on screen. Now she's heading to the Midlands to play the role of Janet in Richard O'Brien's ever-popular rock'n'roll musical, *The Rocky Horror Show*. Here, she tells Midlands Zone all about it...

**Is singing and acting something you've wanted to do since you were very young, Diana?**

Oh yeah, it's been something I've wanted to do for as long as I can remember. I went to ballet, tap and singing lessons, as well as acting school at the weekends. So yeah, it's something I've always wanted to do.

**Obviously you're best known from *The X Factor*. At the time, you were only 17. Reflecting on that experience eight years later, would you have done anything differently?**

No, I don't think I'd have done anything differently when it comes to what happened on the show. I perhaps wish I'd done it when I was a little bit older, maybe. It's such a big thing to do; it's quite stressful. I don't have any regrets at all. It was a great experience and was very much 'of the moment'. I'm very happy with what's happened since then, so I can't really moan about the whole experience.

**Did you ever expect to grab the top spot in the charts with your debut single, *Once*, and your debut album, *Songs From The Tainted Cherry Tree*?**

No, I was so overwhelmed! When I got the number one single, it was wonderful - but when the album went to number one as well, that was so overwhelming. It was such a big body of work, and I'd poured so much time, blood, sweat and tears into it. It was totally unexpected and something that I'll always be very grateful for.

**You moved into musical theatre in 2009, taking the title role in the West End production of *The Rise And Fall Of Little Voice*. What made you decide to take up a new career in theatre so soon after your time on *The X Factor*?**

I did theatre when I was younger and I loved it. It was something that I wanted to do eventually anyway. Nica Burns, the producer of *Little Voice*, and Jim Cartwright, the author, approached me. I was actually in the middle of writing my album and was keen to get on with recording it. But *Little Voice* was such a great opportunity that I decided my album could wait for a while. Taking the part is one of the best things I ever did. It opened so many doors and taught me so much. It trained me so well in terms of my acting and my voice. It was a real Godsend for me, getting that part.

**You then moved into acting roles in film and TV. Is this something you'd like to do more of in the future?**

Yeah, definitely. I love it. I especially love doing comedy. I did *Give Out Girls* and, more recently, *Top Coppers*. I've also done a couple of pilots for other comedies. I just love it. Doing TV is really time-consuming but such great fun.

When it all comes together and you see the final edit, it's really quite magical. I'd certainly love to do more screen work. It's the plan to do more after I finish my current projects.

**Who Inspires your work?**

Acting-wise, Meryl Streep is a genius! I think she inspires a lot of people. Music-wise, I don't really know. I grew up listening to all sorts of artists, from Celine Dion to The Beatles. There were a lot of people who inspired me.

"She's very virginal, she's a young woman who's very sweet and innocent. Then halfway through she becomes this sexy vixen"

**You're heading to the Midlands to star in the legendary *Rocky Horror Show*. Are you excited?**

Yeah! I really can't wait! I'm really nervous and excited about the audiences because I've never played such a big part before. And, of course, *Rocky Horror* has such a huge, cult following. When we're in rehearsals, everyone's thinking about the audience and what they want. I'm excited to see their reactions, but I'm equally worried about shout-outs or heckles! But yes, I certainly can't wait to visit the Midlands and get on stage!

**You're playing the role of Janet alongside a great cast. What excites you most about your character?**

I love how, at the beginning, she's very virginal; she's a young woman who's very sweet and innocent. Then, halfway through, this sexy vixen is released in her. I love singing *Touch Me* and I love doing the bedroom scenes - they're such fun! It's a real buzz when I do that - and to see the transformation she goes through is really exciting.

**The *Rocky Horror Show* was first produced in 1973 and has since become a global phenomenon. Do you feel any pressure to live up to past performers in the same role?**

Yeah, I do. Like I said, the fans are so involved and absolutely love the show. I really want

them to like me and think that I'm doing a good job. It's such an important part of the show that they like my portrayal of the character. I'm just trying to put my own stamp on things. I auditioned for the part and worked really hard, so I'm just going to go in there and do my best and do it my way. I hope the audiences will enjoy Janet as much as I enjoy playing her.

**Were you a *Rocky Horror* fan before you agreed to take part in the show?**

Yeah, I knew the film, as I'd seen it when I was younger. I've got a lot of friends who go and see the show when it tours; they're huge superfans. I loved the film and was very aware of it, but now I've got the fever! It's safe to say that I'm now a big *Rocky Horror* fan!

**How would you describe *Rocky Horror*?**

It's such a fun show! It's a rollercoaster of a show. It's filled with great songs and amazing dancing. It's raunchy, it's sexy, it has sass and it's really funny. All of that and yet quite emotional at the same time. It's very character-driven too. If you want a good night out, where you can get up and dance at the theatre, it's definitely the show to see!

**What's it like working with the rest of the cast? Is there a chemistry?**

Yeah, we all get along like a house on fire! It's such a great company; they're all really lovely. Everybody works really hard and there's no bad energy. I'm excited to get on the road with them all. Liam Tamne, who's playing Frank N Furter, is absolutely fantastic. Every time I watch him, I'm in complete awe of him! The whole company hold it all together and help each other out. I couldn't hope for a better team, to be honest!

**What would be your ideal role in theatre?**

There are so many great characters out there. I'd love to play Roxie Hart in *Chicago*. That would be a bit of a dream!

**Would you like to produce more music in the future?**

Yeah, never say never! I love writing and I love singing, but right now, I'm concentrating on my acting. In the past, I've spent so much time in the studio on my music that I'm taking some time out to do something different.

Diana Vickers stars in *The Rocky Horror Show* at Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre from Monday 25 until Saturday 30 January, Nottingham's Theatre Royal from Monday 25 until Saturday 30 April and at Stoke's Regent Theatre from Monday 23 until Saturday 28 May.

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# LEONA LEWIS



London-born Leona Lewis rose to fame back in 2006 when she won the third series of *The X Factor*. Best known for her 2008 best-selling single, *Bleeding Love* - which hit number one in over thirty countries - she's back on the road after a three-year break from touring, to promote the release of fifth album *I Am*.

With Leona next month bringing her new show to Birmingham's Symphony Hall, Lauren Foster chatted to her about the new album, her departure from Simon Cowell's Syco Records and her *I Am Empowered* campaign...

**What was the inspiration behind new album *I Am*?**

I started writing *I Am* independently, so really out of a record deal. I wanted to write an album that was very empowering and uplifting - and a lot of its tone has that feel to it. There are songs on there like *Thunder And Fire Under My Feet*, which is about getting up and doing something; about really giving you that energy to get out there and overcome any obstacles that may be in your way. It's very uplifting.

"I wanted to write an album that was very empowering and uplifting - and a lot of its tone has that feel to it"

**What makes it different to your previous four albums?**

Well, I feel like this album, although it's me and I'm all about really heartfelt songs, is coming from a bit of a stronger place than before. Maybe my other albums were from a more vulnerable place.

**After seven years on Simon Cowell's label, Syco Records, you signed to Island Records to release and promote your new album. Why the move?**

I decided that I needed a change. I find sometimes that when you're in a situation for a long time, you can get a bit comfortable. I really felt like it was time to change and do something a bit different. I didn't automatically leave the label and jump into a new deal. I actually had time where I was out of a label and just me, on my own and making the album, which definitely had its ups and downs. After I started recording the album, that was when I decided to find a label to promote it.

**You won *The X Factor* back in 2006. Does it feel like a decade since you shot to stardom?**

No, it's flown by so quickly. Every time I say that to someone, they're like, 'No, it hasn't been that long, it's been maybe four or five years'. It really has flown by.

**More often than not, winners of talent shows disappear off the radar. You're one of the very few who're still in the limelight. That**

**must be a great feeling...**

Yeah, it's great that people are still buying my music and feeling the things that I'm saying. Obviously, everything has its high and low moments. I've always stayed true to what I love to do, to myself, and to my hardcore fans, who've really supported me. It's been amazing for me.

**You recently sang in Italy with Andrea Bocelli. How did that come about?**

I studied opera from a young age, so for me to be asked by Andrea was just a dream come true. When I first got asked, I was like, 'No, I can't do it' because I was too scared. But then I got a bit more confident, and I'm now so happy that I did it. It's literally a memory I will never forget.

**Do you still get nervous before going on stage?**

Yeah, I still do - and I allow myself to have that little bit of nervousness. If it gets too much, I have to have a talk with myself and calm myself down. Usually I'm quite good, though, and have just enough nervousness to give me that adrenaline rush.

"I've always liked the idea of doing something with Coldplay. I've always loved that band"

**What's the most memorable performance of your career?**

There are quite a few. I got to play the Beijing Olympics closing ceremony, which was really cool. I did a really lovely gig in St Tropez one time, looking out on to the water - I've been lucky to play a few gigs looking out over beautiful scenery, which is fantastic. I played with Stevie Wonder too, and with Andrea. So yeah, I've had a few really memorable experiences.

**Who are your musical influences?**

Singer-songwriter Eva Cassidy - she's one of my favourites - and Alicia Adams. Vocalists I love are Whitney Houston and Sia.

**If you could collaborate with anyone in the industry, who would it be and why?**

Right now, I'd probably say Sia, because I'm inspired by her. Bruno Mars too; I've always

loved him. I just heard a song by Beyonce and Coldplay. I've always liked the idea of doing something with Coldplay. I've always loved that band.

**You've got a house over in LA. How does life over there compare to life in London?**

It's very different. I'm based in both places. I've got a place in LA because I do a lot of songwriting and recording there. It's just such a different feel. In LA, you get a lot of space. I've got horses, so there's a lot of land for them. London is a little bit more hustle and bustle; everyone's very close and there's more of a community feeling. The style and the vibe of London is very cool.

**Tell us about your *I Am Empowered* campaign...**

*I Am Empowered* started out being an empowerment month. Every day, I'd share something on my social media that was either a speech by someone that was empowering, some words or a quote that I loved, some pictures or a story. Fans started writing to me sharing their stories, and I would share them as well. I started the campaign to get people involved in sharing stories about the different obstacles that people have to overcome. There was a girl who sent me a story about how members of her family had been killed by someone that was close to them. She'd turned her life around - she'd been in a very dark place - and trained to become a nurse so that she could help and save people. She'd managed to turn something devastating into something that was actually positive in her life. I started getting lots of stories like that one sent to me, and I wanted to share them by putting them on my social media. It was really about having a bit of a social shift - especially now, with so much negative and crazy, crazy news happening. I just felt it was important to share something on the flip side that was uplifting.

**You start your UK tour in February. Is there anything else in the pipeline for 2016?**

I want to get back in the studio again after the tour. The tour was initially going to be a bit longer, but I made it this length so that I had time to get back in the studio and start writing again. I want to spend time with the family and chill out too, so I'm looking forward to that.

Leona Lewis will be playing at Symphony Hall, Birmingham, on Sunday 28 February.





# MATTHEW BUGG

A writer, composer, producer, director, musician, actor and dancer, the multi-talented Matthew Bugg is the mastermind behind the modern hit musical *Miss Nightingale*, which flies into Coventry's Belgrade Theatre on its fifth and final UK tour in February.





Set in the dark days of the Second World War, the show tells the tale of an unlikely collaboration between a cabaret singing sensation and a Polish refugee songwriter, delving into the latter's illicit same-sex love affair with an upper-class impresario.

"Before *Miss Nightingale*, I hadn't done much musical theatre," admits Matthew. "I find that a lot of it doesn't really excite me - it can be very predictable and often doesn't engage your brain enough. I wanted to challenge people's expectations of what musicals could be by combining the best bits of musical theatre - the fantastic show tunes, the wit and the humour with a really strong, surprising story, and I think with *Miss Nightingale* we've achieved that. This is a show which makes people cry with laughter one moment and moves them to tears the next."

Creating a challenging, thought-provoking story with sufficient depth involved extensive research into the war period and the real-life situations people faced. As the horror of war and totalitarian regimes created a climate of fear, homosexuality was considered dangerous and unpatriotic, and women's social roles changed dramatically while sons and husbands were away from home fighting.

For those interested in finding out more about the history behind the musical, Bugg and his Marketing Director partner, Toby Oliver, have compiled a range of brilliant resources. These are accessible via the *Miss Nightingale* website and include images, videos, articles and lists of recommended books and films.

"My husband Toby and I run the company together, and his approach to theatre is very much a research-based one, with an academic validation for everything we do. His first degree was in English and Drama, and then he went on to do an MA at RADA. It was great having him on board because he'd always be questioning me and making really insightful points about historical accuracy. Providing that information for those who want it is a really important part of what we're trying to do in terms of demonstrating that there can be much more to musical theatre than people often think."

Toby's family were also an invaluable resource, having fled to Britain just before the outbreak of war.

"George's story is similar to what happened to members of Toby's family. They were either German or Czechoslovakian Jews who were fortunate enough to get out before people started being sent to concentration camps. They've been to see the show and they absolutely love it."

Since making its first outing as a small, studio theatre production in 2011, *Miss Nightingale* has evolved considerably, with changes not only to cast and crew but also to the shape of the show itself.

"Originally there were only three actors and a separate band, so the biggest change is that we've now got a company of six performers who are all actor-musicians. There's also been a lot of restructuring. In total there have been about thirty-five songs written, and only about twenty-two of them are in the current version, four of which are new. I think this illustrates the level of rigour we're approaching it with, and that's probably partly why it's doing so well."

That rigour and drive for perfection sees Bugg take on multiple roles within the company: in addition to composing the music, writing the libretto, producing and serving as musical director, he also plays multiple instruments and has a small acting part.

"I play Harry, who's the brother of the lead character. He's a northern working class lad who's come home on leave and is looking for a good time. He's got some really mucky one-liners, and it's great fun to play a part where almost every single line gets a laugh from the audience. But it's a very small part - he's only in one scene - which is good, because I think I would've struggled to juggle a bigger one with everything else."

Interestingly, for Bugg, juggling these responsibilities isn't about trying to retain full control of the project. If anything, he says, it allows for a greater level of input from the rest of the team.

"It's a huge workload, but we have a great support network behind us, and I think it brings

a real clarity of focus to the project. Because the pool of people working on the show is very small, we're able to be very collaborative. Listening to each other becomes quite easy when you've only got a small number of people to listen to, so everyone can have a say on everything, and we're still able to drive things forward quickly and efficiently."

If Bugg makes big demands of himself, his expectations of the cast are equally high. Every performer in the show must be able to dance, play instruments and sing as well as act. Perhaps surprisingly, for this tour at least, they've had few problems filling every role.

"We had very long shortlists. It was hard when we first started and no one really knew what we were doing, but since 2013, we've been inundated with people wanting to work with us, partly because they liked what we were doing but also because word got round the industry that we had this very collaborative way of working. From then on, we've had the absolute pick of the crop, and this year we've got a really impressive cast, all with very different levels of experience. For Connor O'Kane (George), this is his first big job after leaving college, but he's just astonishing, whereas Ciara Darcy (Maggie/Miss Nightingale) is a very experienced actor-musician who's had a lot of lead roles - she was previously in *Propaganda Swing* at the Belgrade."

Bugg hopes that his radical approach will encourage both audiences and new creators to think about the musical genre differently.

"We want this to be a show that appeals to people who already go to musicals, but equally, if you're the sort of person who doesn't normally like them, we hope that this might be the one to change your mind. We do have audience members saying that all the time - often people who've been dragged along to see it by their partners have ended up really enjoying it."

**Miss Nightingale shows at the Belgrade Theatre from 9 to 13 February. More information about the show and its history can be found at [missnightingale.co.uk](http://missnightingale.co.uk)**





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# STUART MILK

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*The nephew of late politician and LGBT rights campaigner, Harvey Milk, talks to Zone about continuing his uncle's legacy and why teaching LGBT history is so important...*

**Stuart Milk is a global LGBT human rights activist and political speaker. He's also the nephew of the late US civil rights campaigner Harvey Milk. Stuart's Uncle Harvey was the first openly gay person to be elected to public office in California, and was responsible for passing a gay rights ruling for the city of San Francisco in 1978. In that same year, Harvey was assassinated by Dan White, who was also serving in public office.**

Stuart, who says that his uncle's assassination destroyed the 'closet door' and inspired him to come out, is the co-founder and president of the Harvey Milk Foundation. Travelling the

world speaking on public policy and civil rights issues, he's received numerous international awards for his work.

Stuart is in Shropshire next month to speak at a National Festival Of LGBT History event. The festival forms part of the worldwide LGBT History Month. Stuart will be 'sharing the podium' with human rights campaigner Peter Tatchell and historian Dr Emma Vickers

Here, he talks to Ryan Humphreys about the importance of his uncle's legacy. He also explains why the teaching of LGBT history is so important - not only for gay people but also for the wider community.

**How did Harvey inspire you when you were a young man, Stuart, and what was it like having an uncle who was so high profile?**

It was a double-edged sword. When I was a young lad, it was still illegal in most of the US to be gay, it was still classed as a mental illness. I had a prominent and well-known gay uncle whose photo would be splashed all over the front page of the New York Times accompanied by headlines such as 'Devout homosexual runs for office again'. Harvey was my touchstone for authenticity. I couldn't say anything to him that he wouldn't delve into and want to understand. He would let me know that all my differences are important for the world - even when the world doesn't understand that. As a young kid with the last name Milk, which is rare, and having this prominent uncle, it was kind of brutal. People would ask me if I was like my uncle. It was a tough time to be openly gay in the US, like it still is in some parts of the world today. But I would take a ribbing about my last name any day of the week in return for the type of moral compass my uncle was able to give me.

**You once said that your uncle's assassination destroyed the 'closet door' for you. How has his legacy inspired your work since?**

It was Archbishop Desmond Tutu who said to me and Anne Kronenberg - who was Harvey's campaign manager - that Harvey is the only gay person who knowingly gave his life for the movement. That wasn't Hollywood. He recorded messages, he knew he was going to be killed. His messages said, "Let the bullets smash through my brain and smash through every closet door everywhere". His primary purpose was to come out and take a bullet, so that nobody had to be masked anymore. Archbishop Tutu called on me to take his message around the world, so that people who're marginalised and diminished, who're LGBT and non-LGBT alike, will resonate that message and be fed and nourished by it. He hoped it would empower people to be self-accepting.

**You co-founded the Harvey Milk Foundation. What are its main objectives?**

Well, we primarily work around the globe around Harvey's legacy and how we need to continue that. There's this myth that once we achieve marriage equality or once we achieve

some level of legal acceptance, the work is done. We can see that that's simply untrue. In places - for instance, like New York City and San Francisco, LGBT youth are ten or twenty times more likely to be homeless than non-LGBT youth. We have a lot of work to do, and because we're talking about LGBT History Month, one of our phrases is that unless we teach history, we'll repeat it. We've seen that in human kind for a long time. It's very important for people - for instance in the UK - and communities where there's a level of acceptance to be reminded of those who came before us. It's so great to have partnered with LGBT History Month because not only is my uncle part of global history, we're a part of it. Some of the amazing figures in UK history from the LGBT community, we must hear their stories and we must learn not to go backwards. You've got political parties in Europe that will always be willing to take us backwards, meaning that LGBT people would be marginalised and diminished.

**The National Festival Of LGBT History is heading to the Midlands in February, and you're one of the event's keynote speakers. Are you looking forward to it?**

Oh, absolutely! I was honoured to be part of the first National Festival Of LGBT History, it was so inspiring. The work that's done by Sue Sanders and Tony Fenwick and everyone associated with LGBT History Month is amazing. I'm thrilled to be in the Midlands; it will be a highlight of my trip. I'm looking forward to meeting everyone and hearing the community members' own stories. That's one of the great things about LGBT History Month - not only do we learn about history, we can also share our own history. That's an important part of our legacy.

**Why are events such as this, and the discussion of LGBT history, so important?**

Well, like I said, if we don't teach history, we repeat it. We must learn from all these amazing individuals that the UK has who have stood up and stood out when it was impossible to do so. You have these truly heroic figures, not only in literature, but people who challenged Section 28. I can guarantee there are young people who don't even know that Section 28 existed. And you've got people - and we've got them in the US too - who're running for public office who would like to take LGBT rights backwards.

There's a need to teach LGBT history for this reason.

**How would you encourage people to get involved with the National Festival of LGBT History?**

The organisers have put together a brilliant schedule, so please come out and join History Month. Some people think that history is boring, but it's anything but! If you've ever heard me and Sue Sanders talking together, you'll be anything but bored! It'll be exciting. The other great thing about LGBT History Month is that the L, the G, the B and the T are all represented and not left behind. It's important that we don't leave any of those letters behind. So if you don't know about the L, the G, the B or the T, come out and meet us, meet them and learn about it. You'll be fascinated!

**Do you think things such as LGBT history should be part of the curriculum in schools?**

Absolutely! We passed a law in 2009, I'm very proud to say where we got Arnold Schwarzenegger, who's a Republican, to sign a bill establishing Harvey Milk Day. It's the first state-sanctioned holiday so that every year on the 22nd of May, it's Harvey Milk Day in California.

California is the largest state in the US, where one in eight Americans live, and where they must teach about Harvey in the public schools. That's now been expanded to teaching about LGBT history. Initially, LGBT history was opposed by a majority of the people who would be teaching it. Once they learned about Harvey, they didn't oppose that. Once they saw that this wasn't going to convert someone who isn't LGBT to an LGBT person, they realised it embraces diversity. So we now have three states in the US where LGBT history is mandated to be taught in schools. It's been a positive. Even businesses have embraced it, as well as communities and families. Teaching LGBT history in schools is a must.

The National Festival of LGBT History will be taking place from Friday 12 to Sunday 14 February in Shrewsbury, Shropshire. For more information, visit [www.shrewsburylgbthistory.org.uk](http://www.shrewsburylgbthistory.org.uk)



## Birmingham gay venues win prestigious Best Bar None awards

Two popular venues in the heart of Birmingham's gay village have received Birmingham Best Bar None awards.

The Nightingale Club on Kenilworth Street was named Best Birmingham Nightclub, beating off the challenge of numerous other quality venues, whilst gay scene favourite The Village Inn on Hurst Street bagged the award for Best City Centre Bar.

David Nash, Operations Director for both venues, commented: "We're delighted to have received Best City Centre Bar for The Village Inn and Best

Birmingham Nightclub for The Nightingale. It's these prestigious, nationally recognised annual awards that the hard work and effort of the venues' management and staff is being recognised, particularly in a fiercely competitive market.

The Birmingham Best Bar None Awards are classed as the 'Oscars of pub management', highlighting those premises which are raising the standard by taking pride in their surroundings, operating responsibly and demonstrating a commitment to reducing alcohol-related crime.



The Nightingale collect their award

## Top cabaret artist launches fab new character at popular Birmingham gay venue following online petition campaign

A drag artist popular with Midlands audiences has been forced to retire one of his best-known characters following claims that the act is racist.

Performer Charlie Hides' popular drag act, Laquisha Jonz, was due to appear at Birmingham's Eden Bar and numerous other clubs nationwide. She has now been replaced with a brand new character by Mr Hides.

Mr Hides' decision to retire Laquisha comes after 14 successful years playing the character. She has now been replaced by Lsa Q Jones, a cousin of Laquisha's, who made her debut performance at Eden Bar in December.

The switch follows the setting up of a petition by London-based Chardine Taylor Stone, who claimed that the Laquisha Jonz character was "a racist act, based on misogynist stereotypes of Black working-class women".

Taylor Stone went on to say: "We are asking these venues to stop booking Laquisha Jonz and to create a code of conduct that supports artistic freedom but says NO to acts that perform or perpetuate racist stereotypes."

Commenting on the petition, Garry Prentice, co-owner of Eden Bar, told Midlands Zone: "After having conversations with many of

Charlie Hides



Lsa Q Jones



Eden's customers, from a whole spectrum of ethnicities, not one of them I asked about Laquisha Jonz said they were ever offended or found Charlie's act racist.

"After speaking to my business partner, Gary, about the petition, we've come to the conclusion that, as a venue, we will not be dictated to like this about who will be booked to perform at our venue."

## Universities seek same-sex couples for Civil Partnerships survey

Researchers from Coventry University and the University of Worcester are asking same-sex couples from across the UK to tell them about their views and experiences ten years on from the introduction of the Civil Partnerships Act 2004.

The act introduced on 5 December 2005 created the new, legally recognised relationship of civil partners for the first time in the UK, giving same-sex couples access to rights and responsibilities previously reserved for those who were married.

Eight years later, the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 was introduced alongside the Civil Partnerships Act.

The universities' researchers want couples who are currently or have previously been in a civil partnership or same-sex marriage to take part in an online survey to find out what these different options mean to them.

Since the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act came into force, the number of people in England and Wales registering civil partnerships has fallen by 70%, according to the Office for National Statistics. Many same-sex couples in England and Wales are now converting their civil partnerships to marriages. Meanwhile, civil partnership remains the only option for same-sex couples in Northern Ireland, which has yet to legislate to allow same-sex marriage. There are also calls in the form of the Equal Civil Partnerships campaign for civil partnerships to be opened up to opposite-sex couples. Those wishing to take part in the survey should visit the following link: [coventry.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/civil-partnership-same-sex-marriage](http://coventry.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/civil-partnership-same-sex-marriage)

GET ALL THE LATEST NEWS AS IT HAPPENS AT MIDLANDZONE.CO.UK

Follow us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/midlandszone](http://www.facebook.com/midlandszone)



## Nottingham Uni students launch new anti-homophobia campaign

The University of Nottingham's anti-homophobia student project, Voice Your Rights, has launched a new campaign, reports the Nottingham Post.

According to the newspaper 'Shake It Out aims to combat homophobia in sport and promote LGBT inclusion. The five-step plan is to raise awareness, educate, make pledges to resist homophobia, monitor progress and celebrate diversity.

The campaign, which has received support from both straight and gay members of the community, has seen the university's men's hockey club produce a 'naked' calendar.

Club president Jack Tranter told the Post: "Our links with the local community and reputation in the BUCS (British Universities & College Sport) league puts us in a really strong position to lead the charge in encouraging other clubs to get involved and address issues of discrimination in sport.

"I want us to be part of a sporting community where people's passion and skill, rather than their sexuality or gender, is at the forefront of discussions."

So far, 72 of the university's 74 sports clubs have endorsed the new Shake It Out campaign, meaning thousands of students are supporting the initiative.

Speaking about homophobia, the managing director of the Shake It Out campaign, Martyn Gray, told the Post: "Homophobia comes in different forms. It could be the use of words like somebody saying 'stop being so gay!' It could be the assumption that a man is necessarily attracted to girls."

For more information about the Shake It Out campaign, visit [www.voiceyourrights.wordpress.com](http://www.voiceyourrights.wordpress.com). The Shake It Out 2016 calendar is available to buy through the Nottingham Students' Union shop at [www.su.nottingham.ac.uk](http://www.su.nottingham.ac.uk).

## Coventry to host its first annual LGBTQ film festival



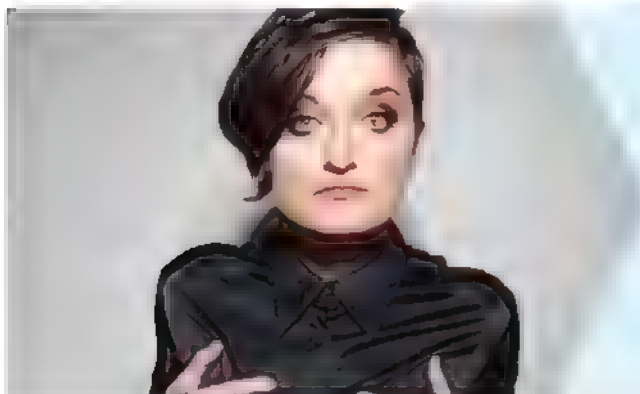
The city of Coventry has followed in the footsteps of other Midlands destinations, including Birmingham and Shrewsbury, by organising its very own LGBTQ film festival.

Christopher Clarke, the festival's organiser, is working on the event with Coventry Pride and the city's 2021 bid for City Of Culture. The festival features a range of screenings including documentaries, feature films and shorts. It takes place at the Ego Arts Venue in Coventry on Friday 29 and Saturday 30 January.

Friday 29 January will see eleven short films from across the world being screened from 7.30pm. Saturday 30 January will see two documentaries: *Queer Places* and *Gazelle - The Love Issue* being screened from 2.30pm, whilst later on in the evening, the feature film will take place at 7.30pm. *Change For A Shilling* is a trans story with a twist set in Coventry by a local film and production company called Halogen Entertainment.

Tickets cost £5 in advance from the Ego Arts Venue website, £6 on the door and £4 for students.

For more information about the first International Coventry LGBTQ Film Festival, visit [www.coventrylgbtfestival.com](http://www.coventrylgbtfestival.com).



## Zoe Lyons to headline Leicester comedy night

Lesbian comedy favourite Zoe Lyons has been announced as a headliner in a gay comedy night at a Leicester theatre in February.

Lyons will be joined by compère Tom Allen and numerous other comedians for an evening of high-quality humour. The

event forms part of the annual Dave's Leicester Comedy Festival.

The gay comedy night takes place at The Y Theatre in Leicester on Friday 12 February, from 8pm. Tickets are on sale now for £14 (£12 concessions).



## SIFA Fireside starts sexual health clinic for homeless LGBTs in Brum

**Birmingham homeless charity SIFA Fireside has announced it's working with sexual health service Umbrella to promote sexual health to the city's homeless LGBTs**

Not accessing medical services is an ongoing problem for many of the charity's clients, some of whom are in high-risk situations. Barriers such as low self-esteem, low self-worth and lack of confidence can prevent individuals from seeking help. Other issues, such as not having an address, not being registered with a GP, addictions and fear of rejection also play a part in the problem.

The clients at SIFA Fireside trust the staff and are more likely to follow through a referral when it's made by someone they trust, and when the service they're needing is being provided in a building they already know.

A clinic takes place at SIFA's Drop in every Wednesday morning, from 9.30am until 1pm,

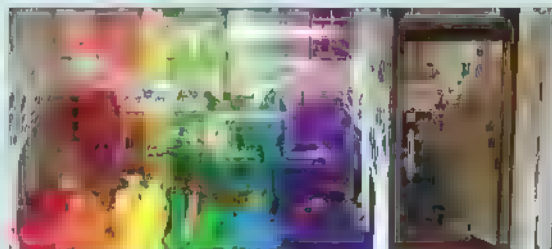
offering confidential sexual health testing for both men and women. The charity also signposts clients for counselling and a alcohol/substance support, offers pregnancy testing and general sexual health advice.

Free condoms and a free Hepatitis B vaccination service are also available.

The friendly and helpful staff have direct links to all the sexual health and contraception services in the Birmingham and Solihull area.

Umbrella is funded by the City Council and provided by Birmingham and Solihull Sexual Health Services, working with Birmingham LGBT, Midland Heart and Reach Out Recovery (CRI) as well as SIFA Fireside.

## LGBT Network Wolverhampton opens charity shop in city centre



**LGBT Network Wolverhampton has opened what's believed to be the only lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans charity shop in the country.**

Situated in the city's School Street, the shop has been opened in an effort to raise funds to support LGBT people across the Black Country. It will sell 'pre-loved' clothes, books and homewares to the local community. As well as contributing profits to the Network's services, the shop will also offer a range of volunteer opportunities for people looking to boost their skills and get into work.

The Network's overall vision is 'a thriving, diverse lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans community in Wolverhampton - a place where LGBT people feel safe and free from discrimination'.

The organisation - which was honoured with The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in 2014 - has ambitious plans to open another shop, selling up-cycled furniture and crafts. Doing so would allow the Network to further grow its presence in the city and raise much-needed funds to help LGBT people in need.

**Kwik Prick** is a free rapid HIV test for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans communities and is available at Trade every Monday\* from 12 noon until 6pm.

- Free and confidential
- Uses only a finger-prick blood sample
- Result within minutes
- 99.7% accurate
- May detect HIV exposure from as little as 4 weeks ago

**Drop-in service every Monday\*, 12 noon until 6pm.**  
 Appointments can be made for other days.

**Location: Trade, 2nd Floor, 27 Bowling Green Street, Leicester, LE1 6AS**  
 For more information call us on 0116 254 1747 or visit us at [www.tradesexualhealth.com](http://www.tradesexualhealth.com)

\*Kwik Prick is not available on Public Holidays  
 Trade Charity Number 1061862

## Trade Sexual Health launches new screening clinic in Leicester



**Leicester LGBT charity Trade Sexual Health has launched a new screening clinic.**

Starting from this month and offered in partnership with Leicester Sexual Health Services, the clinic is based at Trade and will be open every Friday from 11am until 2pm.

The new service follows on from Trade's successful World AIDS

Day event last month, which saw the charity hosting an interactive exhibition. The event celebrated the increased awareness of HIV and AIDS, as well as the charity's continuing work around the subjects of HIV prevention and testing.

**If you'd like more information about Trade and its services, visit [www.tradesexualhealth.com](http://www.tradesexualhealth.com)**

# Gaylife On The Scene



Out and about on scene in Stoke-on-Trent?

Look out for our team in The Factory where you can get your hands on **FREE** condoms and information on staying safe as well as Chlamydia Screening with brilliant giveaways.

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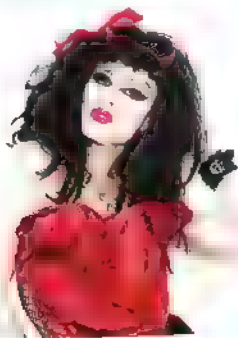


Gaylife Staffordshire-Stoke



GayLifeNstaffs





# China Dethcrash

'Door Whore' and member of the Housewives Of Birmingham, The Nightingale, Birmingham

**Born:** A pit in Yorkshire  
**Star sign:** Aquarius  
**Age:** 21

## About China

### Where did you grow up?

I grew up in a rural ex-mining village near Leeds. Loved the rolling hills, loathed the redneck mentality.

### Single or attached?

Sing e but smitten.

### What makes you happy?

Creating, learning, absorbing culture, quiet spaces, dancing, walking, my dogs, cooking big dinners on cold nights for people I love, sleeping for 14 hours tangled up in a cute boy.

### What makes you sad?

When my anxiety and depression put me in a lazy, ugly, snarling place.

### What makes you angry?

Prejudice, hatred and ignorance, particularly wilful ignorance.

### If you could change any one thing about yourself, what would it be?

Nothing. I'm the sum of my parts including my (many) flaws.

### What's been the most embarrassing thing you've done in your life?

I'm a clumsy boy with an anxiety disorder, everything I do embarrasses me. I've spent 21 years learning how to laugh it off.

### Now that same-sex marriage has been legalised, would you consider getting married?

That's a terrifying ever of commitment and I'm a pretty isolated creature. Maybe.

## Coming Out

### When did you first know you were gay?

It was one of those cases where I got bullied for what I was before I even understood what I was. I think my sexuality began to make sense around the age of 14 or 15.

### When did you come out?

I was 17. I wrote a letter to my dad, threw it in his lap and ran away. And I just slipped into a conversation with my mam that there was a boy I thought was handsome.

### What was school like for you as a gay teenager?

Hell until college. I remember wanting to be a boy-witch. I had a weird sense of femininity that wasn't quite camp, but the other kids reacted really badly to me most of the time. I got beaten up and teased a lot. Most gay boys know the trick of using your wit and making friends with the popular girls.

### Who was the first person you told you were gay, and what was their reaction?

Around the age of 17 I told my friends at our Christmas party that our waiter had the jawline of a god and wanted him to fuck me. I think they were glad I finally admitted to it.

### What would you say to a youngster trying to come to terms with their own sexuality?

They will not understand you, they will try to make you conform, they will try to beat it out of you. Don't suffer in silence. Tell a teacher, throw a punch, defend yourself. And know that if they make you suffer for who you are, you will come out of it with an urge to fight, to better yourself, to escape, to be kinder, and you will

find your tribe some day.

### Have you ever had any experiences with the opposite sex?

A fumbling half-experience that I won't shame the poor lady by talking about.

## Your Career

### You're part of the Housewives of Birmingham at The Nightingale Club in Birmingham. What inspires you?

Everything. I like to blend all of my influences together to create a weird semi-traditional view of the world if Apocalypse struck and we began adorning ourselves with the weird stuff we found around us. My clothing is a hodgepodge of eras, headpieces made from garbage and junk that parody the ceremonial. China is basically my in-joke that the world is fucked and I will be the queen of the wasteland that follows. And let's face it, with David Cameron in power, it'll happen sooner than you think.

### What does being part of the Housewives mean to you?

A lot. They really were a pillar of support, comfort and fun during some painful and lonely times struggling with my mental health at university. I turn to them for support and guidance, be it related to drag or life, and hope they feel they can do the same. It's a sisterhood. Plus, I know there's always one who will be around in the village for an impulsive drink.

### What's the best part of being in the Housewives?

Bringing a bit of magic into the Gale. It's genuinely rewarding to load pissed customers safely into taxis, help a customer who looks

a bit lost find a crowd to be with during the evening, or bring a lady some glue into the bathroom so she can fix a lash.

### Where do you see the Housewives going this year?

I'm hoping that our little project moves at the same momentum. Gracing the Gae Pride float again, gracing more stages, dipping our fingers into as many pies as possible.

### Who, alive or dead, would be your dream guest host?

I'd have to hold a witches' council: Kate Bush, Coco Rosie, Stevie Nicks, Bowie, Bjork, Sinead O'Connor, Gwen Stefani, etc. And we'd resurrect Eartha Kitt to MC the event live onstage.

## Gay Scene

### How long have you been frequenting the Midlands gay scene?

Since I moved here for university, 18.

### And what's been your fondest memory of the gay scene?

Gittershit. When Lacey created her own night with a little help from us regulars, it was a real testament to the community coming together to create a little utopian pocket where anything goes.

### Who's your favourite cabaret act on the gay scene?

Sadly, I'm usually working or hunkering down during cabaret time, but I live for Twiggy. It's a camp laugh in brilliant costumes, but she really cuts through the zeitgeist of our culture with her blend of spoken word and song.

### Who's your favourite person on the gay scene?

What a cruel question - this box is too small. But I have to give big love to Jon, Dan and Ant for being encouraging, kind and understanding always. And I don't tell them as often as the rest of the regulars I drunkenly cuddle in the smoking area.

### What do you most enjoy about the gay scene?

Family vibes. Birmingham is the second city, but it has a village mentality that I really appreciate. We all know each other and look out for one another.

**What have you noticed about the way the gay scene's changed over the years?**

Its most rapid change is over this past year. At the first party I hosted for the Night ngale, I was met with a mix of enthusiasm, curiosity and downright confusion or contempt. Now there's a much more open, fluid, anything-goes mentality that I appreciate.

**How would you change the gay scene?**

Weed out internalised prejudices. Femme shaming and transphobia aren't all that uncommon on the scene, and honestly the best parties are a warm, eclectic, melting pot. A party is a social gesture, if we create a space where everyone can co-exist for one night, we can bring that harmony into the world.

## Time Out

**Where do you like to go on a night out?**

The Night ngale, Missing, The Village Inn, The Jekyll And Hyde, Digbeth First Fridays – any art events I can get to. I also heard the Spotted Dog was good. Who wants to take me for a drink?

**What do you do to relax?**

I love baths. I can spend five hours in the tub with a book and a beer.

**What do you enjoy on telly?**

I only really tune in for documentaries. I like learning about the weird and wonderful.

**What was the last album or track you bought?**

Saved By The Girl – a compilation album of '90s power anthems by women, with lots of angst, guitars and alt pop/rock vibes for my sister. Thanks, Dan, hun.

**Which one website do you spend the most time on?**

YouTube. I love trawling for obscure documentaries, performances, little snippets of moments I've missed.

**What type of holiday do you prefer?**

White sand and plentiful cocktails.



## Quickfire

**Who's your favourite actor?**

Elizabeth Taylor in *Who's Afraid Of Virginia Woolf*

**What's your favourite book?**

*The Virgin Suicides* by Jeffrey Eugenides

**Half empty or half full?**

Either way, time for you to buy me another.

**What's your favourite food?**

Olives.

**And how about your favourite drink?**

Margaritas

**Madonna or Lady Gaga?**

Who?

**If you could take a selfie with one person, alive or dead, who would it be?**

Joan Crawford



# Gaylife On The Scene



Out and about on scene in Stoke-on-Trent?

Look out for our team in The Factory where you can get your hands on **FREE** condoms and information on staying safe as well as Chlamydia Screening with brilliant giveaways.

Add us on Facebook or Twitter.



Gaylife Staffordshire-Stoke



GayLifeNstaffs

# THE VIRAL ROUND UP

HERE'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN LOOKING AT ONLINE...

## CELEB SNAPS! OUR FAVOURITE PICTURES FROM INSTAGRAM



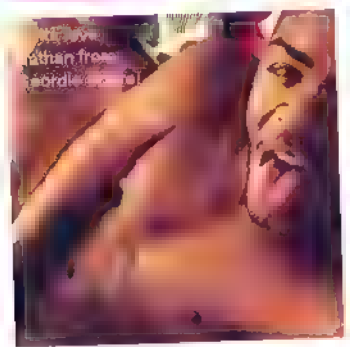
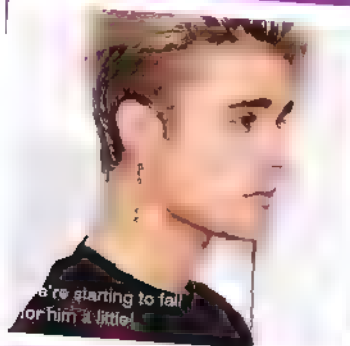
We all do it - spend hours on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. Often, we're distracted from what we should be doing by cat videos and funny pranks - or by something feelgood that's been shared so much on the net it's officially classed as 'viral'. Well, here are some of Midlands Zone's favourites from the past month!

**YOUTUBE** celebrates 2015 as **LGBT STARS** of the internet join in for annual 'year in review' video...

Each and every year, the folks over at YouTube create a 'year in review' video, featuring the biggest songs and YouTube stars of the previous 12 months. Of course, 2015 is no exception, and, as usual, the remix features stars from the online video website's huge LGBT community. Cameo appearances come from the likes of Tyler Oakley, Todrick Hall, Connor Franta, Hannah Hart and Ingrid Nison. The video also flies back in time to 2005, when the site first started. Watch it here [youtu.be/KK9bwTIAvgo](http://youtu.be/KK9bwTIAvgo)



**TAKE A LOOK!** Eight inspiring and cute ways people came out in 2015!



Our friends over at Gay Star News have compiled a list of eight really awesome videos of people coming out to friends and family. Some are cute, others are funny, but all are well worth watching! Check out the videos here: [bit.ly/1RJOBY2](http://bit.ly/1RJOBY2)



The smash hit LGBT musical tours the UK for the fifth & final time

# MISS NIGHTINGALE - THE MUSICAL

"Witty, entertaining & wonderfully stylish" ★★★★★ GAYDAR



Tue 9 Sat 13 Feb  
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belgrade.co.uk 024 7655 3055

Wed 17 Sat 20 Feb  
**BUXTON OPERA HOUSE**  
buxtonoperahouse.org.uk 01298 72190



## thinking of adoption?

every child brings  
something new to a family

A loving and secure family can give children the best start in life, but children like David, Sophie and Joshua, Mia and Daniel and Kieran are still waiting.

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Adoption is a VAA registered by OFSTED  
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# IT'S TIME TO VOTE!

The Midlands Zone **Readers' Awards** are back for 2016!

Yes, it's that Midlands Zone Readers' Awards time of year again, folks! We all have our favourite Midlands gay bars, clubs, stores, people, personalities and charities - and this is your chance to show how much you appreciate them. Nominate and vote for your favourites to help them secure a title worthy of their work!



Miss Penny collecting the award for Best Cabaret Act at last year's Midlands Zone Readers' Awards.

Every year, thousands of you step up to the plate and vote for your favourites in the Midlands LGBT community. And if you want to do the same in 2016, you've only got until Monday 18 January to take part in the first round of voting!

Once we publish the February issue, we will be re-opening the voting with the TOP FIVE in each category. All votes must be submitted online before Monday 29 February.

And don't forget to enter our FREE PRIZE DRAW for your chance to win a whopping £1,000 in cash!

To enter, simply vote online and then complete our online readership survey.

The results of the Midlands Zone Readers' Awards will be announced at an awards ceremony to take place in March. Keep your eyes peeled for more information!

## This year's categories

- Best Birmingham Gay Nightclub
- Best Midlands Gay Nightclub (Outside B'ham)
- Best Birmingham Gay Bar
- Best Midlands Gay Bar (Outside B'ham)
- Best Midlands Community Pub/Bar
- Best Midlands Café Bar/Restaurant
- Best Midlands Overall Gay Venue
- Best Midlands Venue for Men
- Best Midlands Venue for Women
- Best Midlands Live Entertainment Venue
- Best Midlands Gay Venue - Outdoor Area
- Best Midlands One-Nighter
- Best New Midlands Gay Venue
- Best Midlands LGBT Pride Event
- Best Midlands LGBT Event
- Midlands LGBT Charity Group of Achievement
- Midlands LGBT Social/Sports Group
- Midlands LGBT Personality of the Year
- Best Midlands Comper/host
- Best Midlands Cabaret Act
- Best National Cabaret Act
- Midlands Friendliest Bar Person
- Midlands LGBT Venue with the Friendliest Bar Staff
- Midlands Friendliest Security/Door Person
- Midlands LGBT Venue with the Best Security Door Staff
- Midlands Bar DJ
- Midlands Club DJ
- Midlands Gay Sauna/Health Club
- Midlands LGBT Friendly Store or Online Store
- Youth Achievement Award
- Lifetime Achievement Award
- Outstanding Contribution to the LGBT Community

**HOW TO VOTE:**  
SIMPLY LOG ON TO:  
**www.midlandszone.co.uk**

The top finalists in each category will be selected on **MONDAY 18 JANUARY**. Their names will be published in the February issue. The voting will then continue until Monday 29 February.

To enter the free prize draw for £1,000, simply VOTE and then complete our Readership Survey and we'll select a lucky winner at random!





# NEW YEAR, NEW TECH!



2



3



1



4



5



6

Great  
sound!

## 01 MIO MiVue 518 Dashboard Camera

This Mio MiVue 518 Dashboard Camera includes GPS for video position logging and a microSD card slot to record your driving trips in HD – the ideal way to protect your no-claim bonus.

£75.00

[www.currys.co.uk](http://www.currys.co.uk)

## 02 OnePlus X

A beautifully designed smartphone that makes any other competitor look like a toy. Made from premium materials and featuring its own version of Android, called Oxygen OS, the OnePlus X is a masterpiece of design.

£199.00

[www.oneplus.net](http://www.oneplus.net)

## 03 bPay Fob

The bPay fob is light weight and discreet, to make paying even easier. No batteries needed just quick and easy contactless payments. It's compatible with any UK Visa or MasterCard credit or debit card.

£19.99

[www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk)

## 04 Samsung Galaxy Gear S2

The Galaxy Gear S2 smartwatch comes full circle with a stainless steel body that sits slim and sleek on your wrist. Customising the watch face and changing watch bands is so easy, it's a device for all occasions.

£269.00

[www.samsung.co.uk](http://www.samsung.co.uk)

## 05 Sonos Play 1

With its new compact size, the Sonos Play 1 delivers the same epic Hi-Fi sound. No other wireless speaker packs so much Hi-Fi sound into such a compact design. Stream all your music to any room in the house.

£161.00

[www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk)

## 06 TomTom GO 50

Get to your destination quicker and more safely with the new TomTom GO 50. It features real-time traffic info and life-time map updates, as well as voice control so you can safely use the device whilst driving. It's one of the best sat navs out there!

£80.00

[www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk)

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# FABULOUS FASHION!

*A selection of great looking pieces to get you through the winter months, regardless of when or where you're wearing them...*



## 01 Black Textured Overcoat

For a formal finish on day and night looks, try this textured overcoat for the winter season. It features button front fastening, pocket detail and simple long sleeves.

£69.99  
[www.newlook.com](http://www.newlook.com)

## 02 Camel Borg Collar Coat

Every menswear winter wardrobe needs a camel coat. Try this borg trim double-breasted design as a staple piece. Featuring a Borg trim collar, double-breasted front and simple long sleeves.

£64.99  
[www.newlook.com](http://www.newlook.com)

## 03 Slim Fit Satin Trousers

For something a bit different from your day-to-day pair of jeans, why not try these slim-fit satin trousers. Featuring five pockets and stretch, satin-weave cotton with a regular waist, slim legs and a button fly.

£24.99  
[www.hm.com](http://www.hm.com)

## 04 Blue Poplin Grandad Collar Shirt

Add a bit of style to your wardrobe with this blue poplin grandad-collar shirt from River Island. Simple and smart, you'll be turning heads.

£25.00  
[www.riverisland.com](http://www.riverisland.com)

## 05 Checked Cotton Shirt

If you want something a bit more casual, then opt for this regular fit checked shirt in a cotton weave with a button-down collar, chest pocket.

£14.99  
[www.hm.com](http://www.hm.com)

## 06 Brown Italian Leather Apron Detail Loafers

Finish off your outfit of choice with these smart loafers, made from brown Italian leather. With a small block heel and leather lining, you know they're the real deal.

£70.00  
[www.riverisland.com](http://www.riverisland.com)

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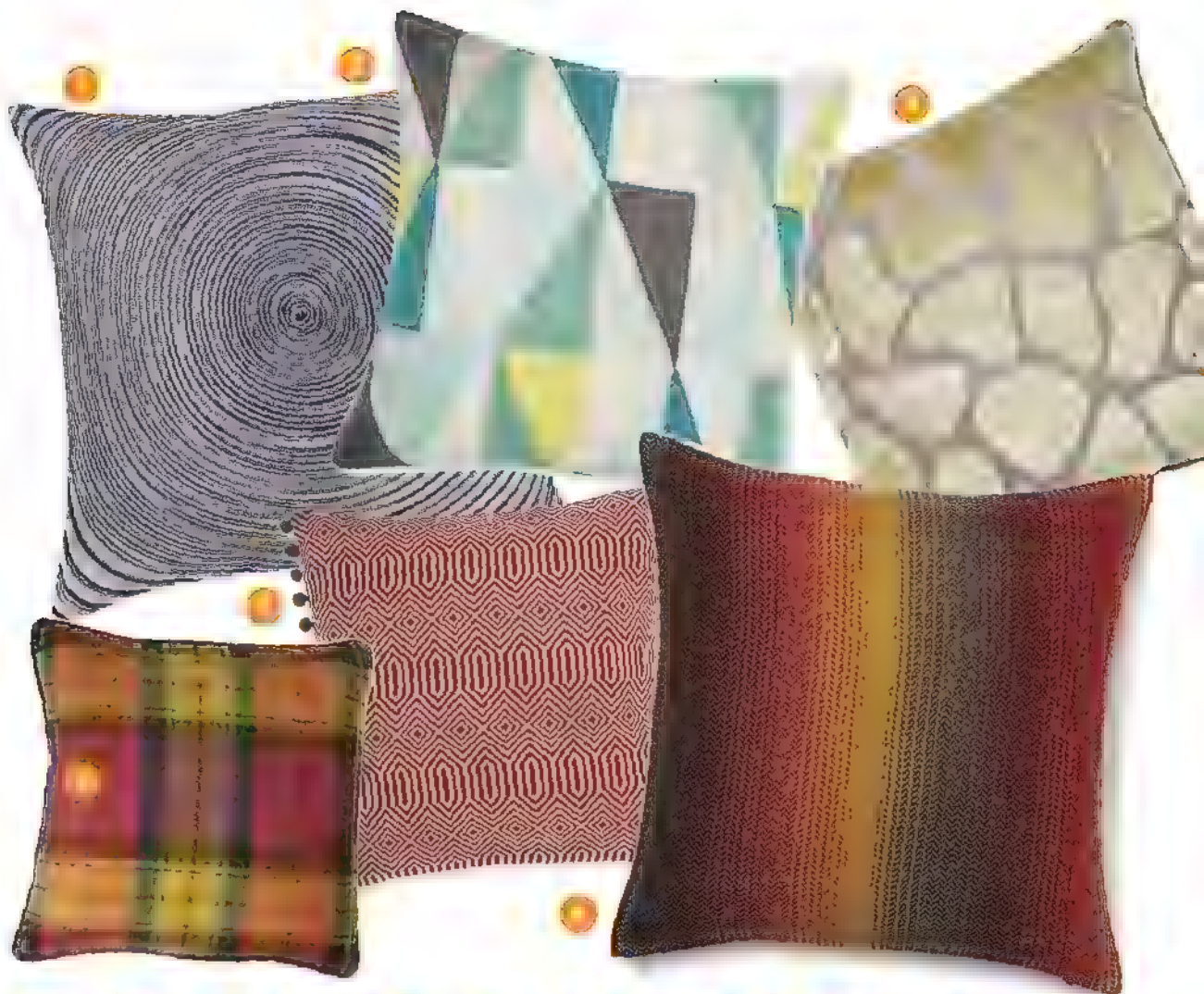


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- 0800 783 7953





# COMFY CUSHIONS

## Stylish cushions for your home

### 01 Spiral Cushion

Bring a modern edge to your living room decor with this spiral cushion, designed with a fun, embroidered swirl pattern featuring in beautiful shades of silver and blue.

£16.99

[www.dunelm.com](http://www.dunelm.com)

### 02 Embroidered Geo Cushion

Brighten up your sofa and living room with this stylish embroidered cotton cushion, featuring numerous geometric shapes in soft colours. A great addition to any chair or sofa.

From £18.00

[www.next.co.uk](http://www.next.co.uk)

### 03 Natural Giraffe Cushion

This contemporary cushion is perfect for bringing a novel safari theme to your living space, with a tribal, giraffe print pattern and a textured feel. A vibrant addition to your home.

£14.99

[www.dunelm.com](http://www.dunelm.com)

### 04 Dorma Berwick Plaid Cushion

Boasting a colourful checked design, this square cushion will add a touch of warm colour to your home, instantly brightening up your sofa with its eye-catching design.

£39.99

[www.dunelm.com](http://www.dunelm.com)

### 05 Red Geo Jacquard Cushion

Continue the geometric theme in your living room with this stunning and hypnotic red geo Jacquard cushion. It is nicely finished off with pom pom detailing along the edges.

£16.00

[www.next.co.uk](http://www.next.co.uk)

### 06 Gradient Striped Cushion

This stylish square cushion is filled with recycled polyester stuffing. Using recycled materials helps to conserve the earth's natural resources and protect the environment for future generations.

£19.50

[www.marksand-spencer.com](http://www.marksand-spencer.com)

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# NEW YEAR, NEW YOU

## 10 grooming resolutions...

### Moisturise

If there's only one thing you do on this list, make sure it's this one! It'll keep your skin supple and healthy – and may even help out with those pesky wrinkles in the future! Do it twice daily – once in the morning and once before bed. Your skin will absorb moisturiser better when you're asleep!

### The right way to wash

If you wash by filling your basin full of water you won't be doing anything more than splashing dirty water and product residue back onto your skin. That can lead to all sorts of problems – from spots to irritation. This one's simple – just use warm, running water. Your skin will love you for it!

### Equipment TLC

If you wet shave, then show your razor a bit of tender, loving care by purchasing something like a RazorPit (£39.70 from Amazon.co.uk). It's a razor-blade sharpener that's made from a special silicone. It will help to remove the residue of hair and skin that makes your razor feel dull. It'll also help to make your blades last for up to 150 shaves.

### Shave the right way

If you think you're getting a closer shave by going against the direction of hair growth, think again! All you're actually doing is pulling the hairs, damaging the follicles and causing razor burn. Ouch. In fact, hair grows in all sorts of directions, so take a close look and start shaving with the grain.

### Don't rush your shave

Speaking of shaving, don't rush it! Stubble needs a couple of minutes to soften once you've applied shaving foam or gel and a bit of water. If you rush straight in and finish the job quickly, you'll get that dreaded razor burn for sure!

### Keep your gums healthy

Gum disease is a leading cause of tooth loss. In fact, it's even been linked to things like heart disease and erectile dysfunction – so perhaps this year you should pay your gums a bit more attention? The easiest way to help stop the rot is to floss daily. Alternatively, use interdental sticks and mouthwash.

### The SPF Factor

Protecting your skin against skin damage is important. You may want that natural, all-over tan, but do it safely! Skin suffers the effects of

low-level sun damage throughout the year. Grab yourself a daily moisturiser that contains a built-in sunscreen and apply every morning. You'll thank yourself later on in life.

### Going bald?

If you're one of those guys who's facing baldness, embrace it! Just remember that less is more. Wear a shorter, more flattering cut – and avoid the dreaded comb-over at all costs!

### Use the right products

You probably use an all-in-one shower gel when having your daily wash. However, due to the high levels of fragrance in this type of product, it's not good for either your hair or your face. Find a shampoo that suits your hair type and a separate facial wash that suits your skin.

### Use your own!

Living with your boyfriend or girlfriend may mean that you're tempted to share each other's grooming products. Don't. You're both probably using products that suit your respective skin types. And besides, you may well cause an argument when you thoughtlessly use the last of it!



# BE A BETTER YOU IN 2016

Wellbeing: New Year thoughts from Birmingham LGBT



Are you thinking about what changes you might want to make in the year ahead? We asked our friends over at Birmingham-based charity, Birmingham LGBT for some top tips! Here are a few ideas for those New Year's resolutions from Dan Auluk, Penny Barber and David Viney...

Birmingham LGBT are dedicated and passionate about improving the

wellbeing of LGBT people. What's wellbeing? Well-being is simply seeing your life in a positive light and feeling good

We provide and support a wide range of Sexual Health & Wellbeing services to motivate and inspire our communities, enabling people to grow and achieve their full potential

## Have healthy relationships

**Why?** Healthy relationships are a vital component of health and wellbeing. Strong relationships contribute to a long, healthy, happy life. We believe everyone is entitled to enjoy long, healthy lives with fulfilling social and sexual relationships. So don't do anything you don't want to do. Avoid "friends" and "partners" who put you down and don't try to coerce anyone else. Respect yourself and others in intimate and other relationships. Call us if you or anyone you know might be experiencing abuse. Ask for our specialist Domestic Violence Worker

## Get tested regularly

**Why?** Most people think they would know if they had a sexually transmitted infection (STI) or HIV, right? Wrong!

The truth is many STIs have no noticeable symptoms - or they have mild signs that are easily overlooked. If you are, or ever have been, sexually active - get tested.

Testing is quick and easy. There's no need to book an appointment at a clinic. Take control of your sexual health - just order a self-sampling kit and send it straight to the lab [umbrellahealth.co.uk/our-services/self-sampling-kits](http://umbrellahealth.co.uk/our-services/self-sampling-kits)

If you'd prefer to see someone face to face drop into Birmingham LGBT any Thursday 1pm - 7pm

## Stock up on condoms and lube

**Why?** Condoms reduce the risk of HIV and STIs such as gonorrhea, chlamydia, herpes and syphilis. Other strategies reduce the risk of HIV transmission, but may not reduce the risk of STI transmission. STIs can increase your risk of HIV transmission. Lube reduces the risk of abrasions (transmission sites), and of condoms splitting. In Birmingham & Solihull we have access to free condoms and lube from the Birmingham LGBT Centre and from most LGBT venues, bars and clubs in Birmingham. You can also visit the Birmingham LGBT Centre for a choice of condoms, lube, gloves and dental dams or use our postal service

## Be more active

**Why?** Keeping active improves and sustains wellbeing, providing many physical and mental health benefits. No need to join a gym! Activate runs FREE drop-in fitness sessions for all levels and abilities. With classes throughout the week, you're sure to find something enjoyable! Activities include stress box, table tennis, line dancing and yoga.

You can also join one of the City's many LGBT Sports clubs to get fitter. They have great social activities for members too

## Make new friends

**Why?** The health risks from being alone or isolated are comparable to the risks associated with cigarette smoking, blood pressure, and obesity. A broad range of social interaction improves wellbeing. The LGBT scene in Birmingham is thriving, from the vibrant bars and club life, to social and community groups and new social activities facilitated through websites and apps like Meetup. Now is a good time to find new social activities that work for you.

## And finally... be PROUD of YOU!

**Why?** It's all too easy to internalise the stigma and discrimination we may face or fear, because of our sexual identities, trans status or HIV status, and become self-prejudiced. This can have a massive impact on our self-worth, social relationships and community involvement

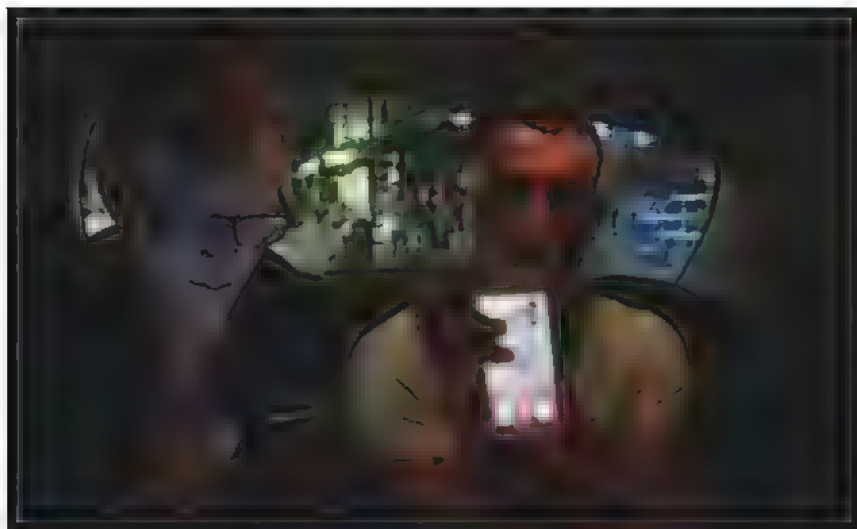
Think critically about how internalised discrimination could be impacting your life. Don't feel guilty or shameful, just take the steps, one by one, to free yourself of this weight that can keep us all down

**For more information about Birmingham LGBT's services and Umbrella Sexual Health visit [www.birminghamlgbt.org.uk](http://www.birminghamlgbt.org.uk) or call 0121 643 0821.**



# That's Entertainment!

This month's hot new DVD, music and book releases



## DVD CHEMSEX (18)

Chemsex is the name given to the rising phenomenon which refers to the use of drugs in a sexual context. Often referring to group sex that can last for days, chemsex's allure has led to many young men being trapped in a vicious circle of sex, addiction and dependence.

This powerful and potent film tells the stories of gay men whose lives have been affected by the crisis; from self-confessed 'slammers' to sexual health workers, from those who deny there's a problem to those who 'got out alive'. Offering unprecedented access, Chemsex is a brave and unflinching journey into the dark underworld of modern, urban gay life.

The movie is available on DVD from Monday 11 January.



## DVD DRESSED AS A GIRL (18)

London's alternative East End drag phenomenon comes under the microscope in this fabulous account of six years in the lives of its most celebrated performers.

See Jonny Woo, John Sizzle, Holestar, Scoffee, Amber, Pia and Ma Butcher dazzle, surprise and outrage audiences with their antics, both on stage and behind the scenes. There's enough by way of eye make-up and sequins on dis-

play to sink a battleship, but at the heart of this surprisingly intimate portrait is the dark side of their lives. The relentless quest for glamorous originality often comes at a personal cost. The film is both a record of a fascinating style of hyper-costumed performance and an insight into the fragile personal lives of these artists.

This is truly the frockumentary of the year.

**Out now**

## BOOK THE SUM OF THESE THINGS

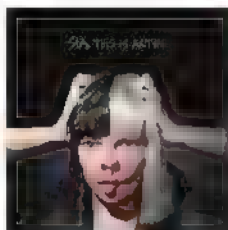
by Emily O'Beirne

In the sequel to *A Story Of Now*, Claire Pearson has already learned a few things this summer. Like falling for a girl is easy. Well, it is if that girl is Mia.

What Claire hasn't learned yet is that now comes the hard part: learning to trust in this new relationship. And that isn't easy when no one has ever given you a reason to trust before. Then there's the pressing question of what to do with her life. Claire's new volunteer job working with kids offers a glimpse of a potential future, but it definitely isn't something her pushy mother is going to like.

Still, everything feels hopeful as she embarks on the next chapter of her life, armed with new friends and the warm and funny Mia.

But Claire quickly discovers that negotiating this new terrain of adulthood isn't easy. Over the rest of this momentous summer, the biggest lesson Claire must learn is how not to let anything get in the way of her happiness. Especially herself.



## MUSIC THIS IS ACTING

by Sia

This *Acting* is the seventh album from Australian singer-songwriter Sia. Said to be more pop than her previous works, the album features lead track *Alive*, which entered the Top 40. It also showcases the songs *Bird Set Free* and *One Million Bullets*.



BIRMINGHAM  
HIPPODROME

Winter/Spring A new look for a new year

**MARTI PELLO JULIAN CLARY LEE MEAD MATT SLACK**

**Aladdin**

The Magical 3D Pantomime Adventure!

Until Sun 31 Jan  
From £14

**THE ROYAL BALLET**

Tue 9 - Sat 13 Feb  
From £18.50

**BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET**

Wed 17 - Sat 20 Feb  
Ashton Double Bill

Wed 24 - Sat 27 Feb  
Romeo & Juliet

Wed 17 - Sat 27 Feb  
From £10

**MARY POPPINS**

Wed 9 Mar - Sat 23 Apr  
From £25

**LET IT BE**

A CELEBRATION OF THE MUSIC OF THE BEATLES

Mon 25 - Sat 30 Apr  
From £13.50

DFB Birmingham City Council

International Dance Festival Birmingham 2016

Carlos Acosta

Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan

Ballet BC

Tue 3 & Wed 4 May  
From £15

Fri 6 & Sat 7 May  
From £15

Tue 10 & Wed 11 May  
From £15

Tue 17 & Wed 18 May  
£15

Fri 20 & Sat 21 May  
From £15

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Cells cost 4.5p/min plus access charge. 5% transaction charge applies excluding cash sales in person.



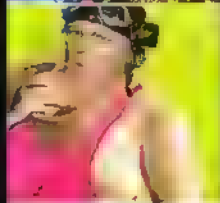
# WORLD CLASS ENTERTAINMENT



SWASHBUCKLING  
PANTOMIME FUN  
**PETER PAN**  
SAT 5 DEC - SUN 3 JAN



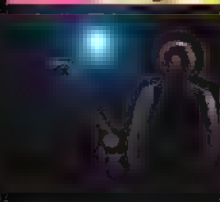
ROCK OUT WITH  
**FAIRPORT  
CONVENTION**  
WED 3 FEB



SIDE-SPLITTING  
COMEDY WITH  
**ROY CHUBBY  
BROWN**  
TUE 29 DEC



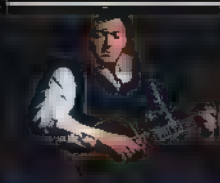
LESLIE JOSEPH  
STARS IN  
**ANNIE**  
MON 1 - SAT 6 FEB



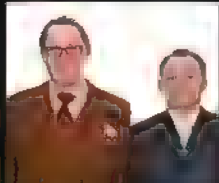
FROM THE WEST END  
**THE SIMON &  
GARFUNKEL  
STORY**  
THU 7 JAN



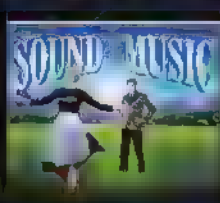
NIGHTS ON BROADWAY  
**THE BEE GEES  
STORY**  
SUN 7 FEB



RELIVE TIMELESS HITS IN  
**JOHNNY CASH  
ROADSHOW**  
SAT 9 JAN



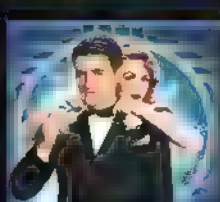
THE ICONIC COMEDY DUO IN  
**25 YEARS OF  
REEVES &  
MORTIMER**  
THU 11 FEB



LUCY O'BYRNE AND  
GRAY O'BRIEN STAR IN  
**THE SOUND  
OF MUSIC**  
TUE 19 - SAT 23 JAN



HOMAGE TO A LEGEND  
**THRILLER LIVE**  
THU 11 - SAT 13 FEB



ELEGANT, GLAMOROUS  
AND WITTY  
**PRIVATE LIVES**  
MON 25 - SAT 30 JAN



ULTIMATE LIVE JUKE BOX  
**THE CLASSIC  
ROCK SHOW**  
FRI 12 FEB



FUN FOR ALL THE FAMILY  
**BIG TIME  
AMERICAN  
WRESTLING**  
SAT 30 JAN



A LAUGH A MINUTE WITH  
**JIM DAVIDSON**  
SUN 14 FEB



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# ZONE hotlist

## THIS MONTH'S HOT EVENTS & THINGS TO SEE AND DO



### THE ROCKY HORROR SHOW

New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, Mon 25 - Sat 30 January; Malvern Theatre, Mon 9 - Sat 14 May; Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Mon 23 - Sat 28 May

X Factor finalist Diana Vickers stars opposite Ben Freeman in a new touring version of Richard O'Brien's cult classic.

It tells the tale of straight-faced Brad and the deliciously corruptible Janet, who arrive at the castle of alien transvestite Frank N Furter and witness the birth of the monster, Rocky.

Great fun's a guarantee - particularly if you get into the spirit of things and attend the show dressed in your very best stockings and suspenders (as many patrons do!)

Other casting includes S Club's Paul Cattermole as Eddie/Dr Scott, Kristian Lavercombe as Riff Raff and one half of comedy duo Punt and Dennis - Steve Punt - as the narrator.

# 2

### JASON DERULO

Barclaycard Arena,  
Birmingham, Sat 30 January

Hot on the heels of landing his fourth UK #1 single with Want To Want Me, the phenomenally successful (and hunky whilst we're at it) Jason Derulo comes to Birmingham as part of his biggest arena tour to date. The latest chapter in Jason Derulo's career comes with his brand new album Everything Is 4. In addition to Want To Want Me, the album also includes Get Ugly, on which he teams up again with producer Ricky Reed to recapture some of the magic that delivered him his two hits to date with the UK #1 smash Talk Dirty and last year's Top 10 favourite Wiggle, and the 80s-inspired track Cheyenne which was produced by Ian Kirkpatrick, The Monsters and The Strangers. Everything Is 4 also includes a number of special guest features including Stevie Wonder, Jennifer Lopez, Meghan Trainor, Keith Urban and more.





# 3

## STRICTLY COME DANCING LIVE

Ever-a-career Arena  
22 Sun 24 January

Strictly hits the road again this month. Hosted by Mel Giedroyc and with regular judges

Len Goodman, Craig Revel Horwood and Bruno Tonioli in tow, the live version sees the show's popular dancers putting their celebrity partners through their paces with a host of new routines. Performing everything from ballroom and paso doble to the waltz and tango, the show's stars are sure to delight Strictly's loyal fans. Taking to the dancefloor this year among others, are Call The Midwife actress Helen George, The Wanted's Jay McGuiness, EastEnders actor Jake Wood, Frankie Bridge from The Saturdays and actress Georgia May Foote from Coronation Street.



# 5

## ALADDIN

Birmingham Hippodrome  
until Sat 31 January

Camp-as-Christmas  
comedian Julian Clary joins

Wet Wet Wet frontman Matt Pellow in Birmingham Hippodrome's spectacular pantomime production. Former Joseph star Lee Mead takes on the role of Aladdin, while Matt Slack and Andrew Ryan play Wishy Washy and Widow Twankey respectively. Stunning 3D effects and a Santa's sack-worth of quality comedy - both mainstay ingredients in the Hippodrome's winning recipe for pantomime fun - also feature.

# 6

## WALSALL PRIDE WOMEN'S MASQUERADE BALL

Arbor Lights, Walsall, Fri 8 January

Walsall Pride is this month throwing a Masquerade Winter Ball to raise funds for the town's annual LGBT festival. The event, which takes place at Arbor Lights, features a headline performance from drag troupe The Sassy Fabulettes, who featured on truTV show The Drag Queens Of London. Other entertainment on the night comes from Ego Dance, with music provided by hostess and DJ, Glamour. Tickets for the event cost £10, include a buffet, free travel and entry to the after-party, and are available from Arbor Lights, The Red Lion and The Lion Bar & Club, Walsall.

# 4

## STEPHEN K. AMOS

The Old Rep  
Theatre,  
Birmingham  
Sat 16 January

Gay comedian Stephen K. Amos returns to Birmingham this month with another sure-to-be-fun show.

"I used to do a joke where I said I'd have to wait for Lenny Henry to die before I could get on television," says Stephen, referring to his belief that big breaks for black comedians are few and far between. Whatever the truth, there's little question that Stephen's very much basking in the television limelight these days. His success is no surprise, mind, given the quality of his material and his effortless ability to strike all the right chords with his ever-appreciative audience.



# 7

## OLIVER!

Curve Theatre, Leicester, until Sat 23 January

Based on Charles Dickens' classic novel, Lionel Bart's award-winning show is one of the most successful musicals of all time, with a score that includes such memorable numbers as Food Glorious Food, You've Got To Pick A Pocket Or Two, Where Is Love? and I'd Do Anything. Paul Kenyon directs



# 8

## OWEN JONES

Nottingham Playhouse, Fri 29 January

Labour suffered a devastating loss in the 2015 general election, while the SNP surged to victory in Scotland.

So what's the future of the left in the UK? How can we build societies run in the interests of working people, not as a racket for the mean and greedy at the top?

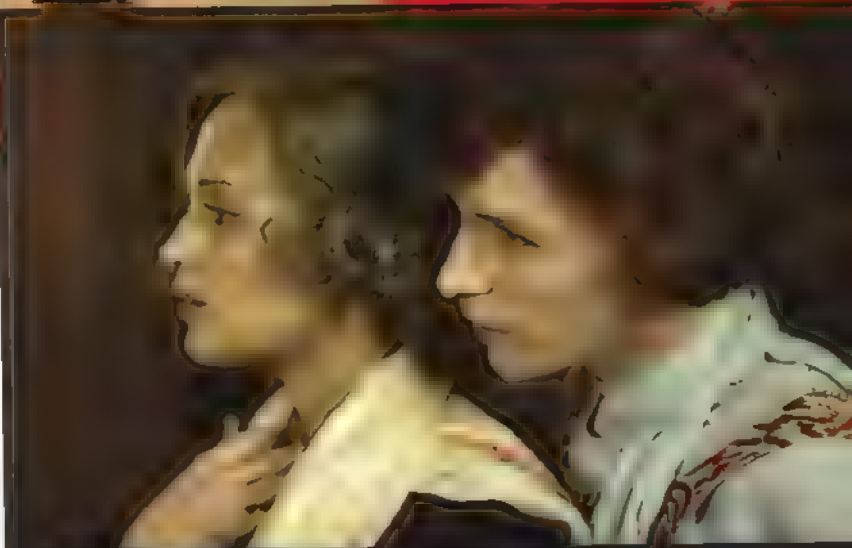
Openly gay Guardian columnist Owen Jones brings this new talk to Nottingham to shine some light on a positive way forward.

# 9

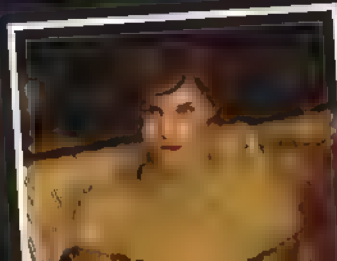
## ELLIE TAYLOR

Bramall Music Building, Birmingham, Thursday 14 January

Ellie Taylor kickstarted her comedy career in her late 20s performing in stand-up reality TV series Show Me The Funny. "I got some other television work out of that and a few bookings," recalls Ellie, "but people's expectations outweighed what I was able to provide. I wasn't really good enough at that stage." Now in her early 30s, Ellie's comedy has come a long way in a short time. "It was tricky back then," she admits, "getting offers that I wasn't ready for but I really do feel like I'm there now."



## 10 THE DANISH GIRL

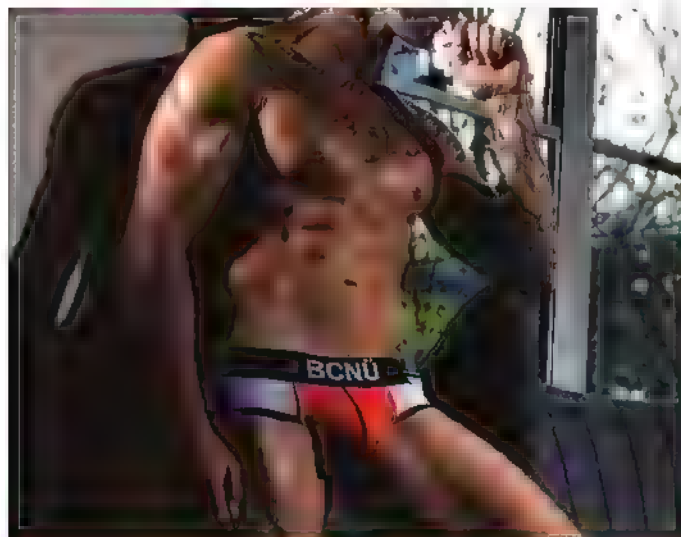


Directed by Tom Hooper (UK/Germany/USA)

Tom Hooper previously directed The King's Speech and Les Misérables and his latest film has been generating Oscar buzz since last summer. Eddie Redmayne plays the transgender pioneer Lili Elbe, who started her life as the (male) artist Einar Magnus Andreas Wegener. Redmayne and Alicia Vikander – the latter as Lili's wife, the illustrator Gerda Wegener – are virtually guaranteed Oscar nominations. Inspired by real events in Denmark in the 1920s.



# WIN! Two pairs of pants from Clone Zone!



**Who doesn't love a new pair of pants for the new year?!**

We've teamed up with the lovely folks over at Clone Zone in Birmingham to give one lucky reader the chance to win not one but two pairs of BCNU Joey Push Up briefs worth £50!

The Joey Push Up was inspired by a kangaroo's pouch and designed to keep you safe until you're ready to play! The pouch will lift, enhance and provide support where you want it the most. Different from other push up technologies, the Joey was created with comfort in mind - it adapts to your specific anatomy and doesn't irritate

the skin. So hop right in, lift your mood and strut your stuff in the Joey Low-Rise Brief from BCNU.

The lucky winner will receive two pairs of these awesome pants - one in Royal and one in Salamander colour combinations. Check out the full range in store or at [www.clonezone.co.uk](http://www.clonezone.co.uk)

To enter this competition, simply answer the following question at [www.midlandszone.co.uk](http://www.midlandszone.co.uk)

**What animal was the Joey brief inspired by?**

- (A) Tiger
- (B) Giraffe
- (C) Kangaroo

Good luck

To enter, simply visit [www.midlandszone.co.uk](http://www.midlandszone.co.uk) before Wednesday 27 December

# WIN! Walsall Pride Masquerade Winter Ball tickets!



Walsall Pride is this month throwing a Masquerade Winter Ball (Friday 8 January) to raise funds for the town's annual LGBT festival.

The event, which takes place at Arbor Lights, features a headline performance from drag troupe The Supreme Fabulettes, who featured on the hit TV show The Drag Queens Of London. Other entertainment on the night comes from Ego Dance, with music provided by hostess and DJ, Glamour

Tickets for the event cost £10, include a buffet, free travel and entry to the after-party, and are available from Arbor Lights, The Red Lion and The Lion Bar & Club, Walsall.

We've teamed up with the event's organisers to give two lucky Midlands Zone readers the chance to win a pair of tickets.

To enter our competition, visit [www.midlandszone.co.uk](http://www.midlandszone.co.uk) before Wednesday 6 January 2016.

**HATE DOESN'T BELONG HERE**

- DISABILITY
- RACE
- RELIGION
- SEXUAL ORIENTATION
- TRANSGENDER

**REPORT IT**  
[WWW.REPORT-IT.ORG.UK](http://WWW.REPORT-IT.ORG.UK)

**HATE CRIMES CAN RECEIVE HARSHER SENTENCES**

STAFFORDSHIRE POLICE  
CHIEF CONSTABLE  
MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

CALL YOUR LOCAL POLICE  
101

REPORT IT HERE

[WWW.REPORT-IT.ORG.UK](http://WWW.REPORT-IT.ORG.UK)

WHAT'S ON IN YOUR LOCAL GAY VENUES

# OUT

JANUARY 2016

## LA VOIX

NEW YEAR CABARET  
WITH THE BRITAIN'S GOT  
TALENT STAR IN BRUM

### SINK THE PINK

London's hottest gay club night comes to Birmingham for NYE re-run!

### LIFE IS A CABARET

Fun and frolics across the Midlands this month with a sack full of cabaret!

### TOWIE'S JOEY ESSEX

Midlands gay venue announces exclusive PA with the cute reality TV star!





## XXL LONDON

WEDNESDAYS 10PM - 3AM

SATURDAYS 10PM - 6AM

PULSE

No1 INVICTA PLAZA, LONDON SE1

[WWW.XXL-LONDON.COM](http://WWW.XXL-LONDON.COM)

## BIRMINGHAM

3RD FRIDAY EVERY MONTH

10PM - 4AM

THE CORE

135 SHERLOCK ST, BIRMINGHAM

[FACEBOOK.COM/XXLLONDON](https://FACEBOOK.COM/XXLLONDON)

## Birmingham bar treats punters to a whole host of **CABARET FUN!**



If you're out and about on a weekend in Birmingham's gay village, the award-winning Eden Bar has three great nights of cabaret for you to enjoy!

First up is the wonderful La Voix on Saturday the 9th, followed the week after by Myra Dubois on Friday the 15th. Then, to wind down the month, it's the fantastic Mary Mac!

**THE EDEN BAR - BIRMINGHAM**

## **SINK THE PINK** comes to Brum for NYE re-run!

Birmingham partygoers are in for a treat this month as popular London gay club night Sink The Pink comes to the Nightingale Club!

Sink The Pink comes to town as part of the gay superclub's New Year's Eve Re-run night, which takes place on Saturday 30 January.

Oh, and for all you Barbie Girl fans, The Aqua Experience is also making an appearance on the same night! This is definitely not an evening to be missed! Bring it on!

**THE NIGHTINGALE - BIRMINGHAM**



## **JOEY ESSEX** meet-and-greet announced for Wolves venue

Fans of the popular reality TV star Joey Essex are in for a Springtime treat.

Newly relocated venue Gorgeous in Wolverhampton has announced an exclusive live PA and meet-and-greet session with the oh-so-cute Only Way Is Essex and I'm A Celebrity star.

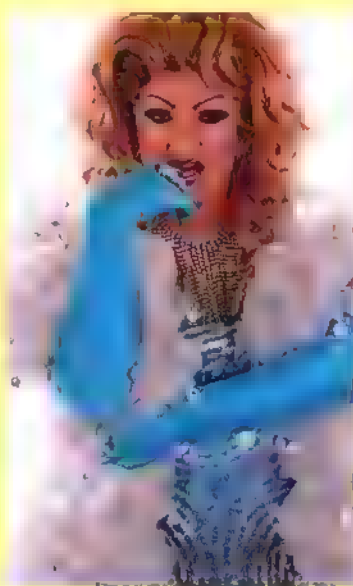
So if you're a fan of Joey's and have been itching to meet him, head down to the venue on Sunday 29 May.

And whilst you're there, you can enjoy a cracking night out too, complete with friendly staff, wonderful partygoers and great music from talented DJs.

**THE VILLAGE INN - WOLVERHAMPTON**



## **FRIDAY NIGHT CABARET** every week at Birmingham bar



If you're out on a Friday night and looking for great cabaret to enjoy, look no further than Birmingham's Village Inn.

Kicking off the venue's January line-up is Miss Penny on New Year's Day. The following week sees Topsy Redfern dropping in, followed by Tany Hyde the week after! On the 22nd, it's the return of Kara Van Park and as per usual Sandra's back at the end of the month to see you into February! Enjoy guys and gals!

**THE VILLAGE INN - BIRMINGHAM**

## **XXL** at The Core is the biggest men-only club night in the Midlands

Men-only club night XXL returns to Birmingham this month - and it promises to be as good as ever!

Taking place on the third Friday of every month (18 December), the popular clubbing event sees men from across the Midlands come out to play and party!

The London club night's Midlands event

features XXL's resident DJ, Christian M, playing the best hits and remixes to get the dancefloor packed.

And be sure to check out the dark room upstairs while you're there! Have fun, guys.

**THE CORE - BIRMINGHAM**





**January**  
**MONDAY**  
 4 11 18 25

**January**  
**TUESDAY**  
 5 12 19 26

**BIRMINGHAM**

**2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS** Sunday to Friday All day & night Wind down after work with a cocktail or two  
**THE LOFT LOUNGE**

**MINISTRY OF POUND** with DJ Mike Emery from 9pm. Selected drinks £1 Open until 2am  
**MISSING BAR**

**CABARET WITH NADA CHIPZ**  
 Every Monday night, head down to the Village Inn for a night of fun cabaret with the incredible Baga Chipz. It's not to be missed!  
**THE VILLAGE INN**

**SUGAR RUSH** £2 entry  
**NIGHTINGALE CLUB**

**MONDAY MADNESS**

**BAR JESTER**

**OUTSKIRTS**

**BAR JESTER**

**FOUNDED** Come and get Pounded

**SIDEWALK**

**WEST MIDLANDS**

**FABULOUS** Fun & Games with resident host Marty (The girl who likes to party) **Mon 4 Jan** - Live cabaret with the Whore of Hampstead Heath Sandra! Free admission before midnight and just £3 after  
**C:21, SHREWSBURY**

**THE MONDAY CLUB** 9pm-5am Student night Everything's £2 (Shots £1) with DJ Lee Edward  
**GORGEOUS, WOLVERHAMPTON**

**SMILE NIGHT**

**THREE FURNACES, TELFORD**

**GET THE PARTY STARTED**

**GOSSIP, STOKE ON TRENT**

**STUDENT NIGHT**

**PINK, STOKE ON TRENT**

**WEST MIDLANDS**

**2 TILL 2** Open from 2pm till 2am

**THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON**

**DISCO** 7pm-midnight

**NEW FORESTERS, NOTTINGHAM**

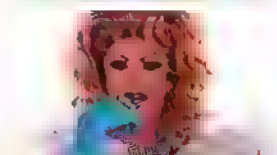
**WEST MIDLANDS**

**90'S NIGHT** - Every Tuesday night 10.30pm-3am  
**NIGHTINGALE CLUB**

**2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS** - Sunday to Friday All day & night Wind down after work with a cocktail or two  
**THE LOFT LOUNGE**

**SCREAM STAR SUPERSTAR** With your host karaoke temptress Gavina. Party starts at 9pm till late  
**THE VILLAGE INN**

**OPEN YOUR SNATCH** Songs Games & Prizes with Miss Penny  
**THE VILLAGE INN**



**TUNE UP TUESDAY**

**BAR JESTER**

**WEST MIDLANDS**

**BIG TUESDAY NIGHT PARTY**

**THE VILLAGE INN**

**THE LION BAR & CLUB, WALSALL**

**CAMP QUIZ** With free buffet Quiz

**THREE FURNACES, TELFORD**

**TRUSTUSITY** Night with DJ Jay playing everything from pop & hip hop to Velvet, Worcester

**FLAUNT** A twist of awesome tunes

**BREWERY BAR, WORCESTER**

**SKYE'S PARTY NIGHT** Doors 5pm - 11pm

**THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON**

**TWISTED TUESDAYS** Cherry Darling

**RAINBOWS, COVENTRY**

**RAINBOWS, COVENTRY**

**EAST MIDLANDS**

**2 TILL 2**

**THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON**

**CHILL OUT NIGHT**

**NEW FORESTERS, NOTTINGHAM**

**GAMES NIGHT** Free Pool and

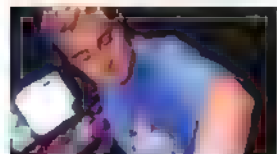
**DOVER CASTLE, LEICESTER**

**January**  
**BIRMINGHAM**  
 1 8 15 22 29

**BIRMINGHAM**

**2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS** - Sunday to Friday All day & night Wind down after work with a cocktail or two  
**THE LOFT LOUNGE**

**2 GOOD 2 MISS** Drinks from just £2 with DJ Mike Emery  
**MISSING BAR**



**KILLER KARAOKE** - with Charlotte the Harlot  
**THE VILLAGE INN**

**2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS**

**SIDEWALK**

**DISCO & DJ**

**THE FOX**

**WEDNESDAY LINE**

**BAR JESTER**

**WEDNESDAY LINE**

**THE WELLINGTON**

**WEST MIDLANDS**

**DISCO & DJ** with DJ Mike Emery

**RAINBOWS, COVENTRY**

**STUDENT WINE NIGHT**

**THREE FURNACES, TELFORD**

**WACKY WEDNESDAYS** Karaoke

**RAINBOWS, COVENTRY**

**WEST MIDLANDS**

**KARAOKE** 8pm till 3am £2 drinks

**THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON**

**GAMES NIGHT** Free Entry

**NEW FORESTERS, NOTTINGHAM**

**WEST MIDLANDS**

**KARAOKE** 8pm till 3am £2 drinks

**THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON**

**GAMES NIGHT** Free Entry

**NEW FORESTERS, NOTTINGHAM**

**WEST MIDLANDS**

**KARAOKE** 8pm till 3am £2 drinks

**THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON**

**GAMES NIGHT** Free Entry

**NEW FORESTERS, NOTTINGHAM**

**January**  
**BIRMINGHAM**  
 1 8 15 22 29

**BIRMINGHAM**

**2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS** - Sunday to Friday All day & night Wind down after work with a cocktail or two  
**THE LOFT LOUNGE**

**CULT** Bringing dirty house back home Top Floor from 10pm  
**NIGHTINGALE CLUB**

**TANGO THURSDAYS** with Marty Happy Hour 12noon-2am  
**THE VILLAGE INN**

**I <3 THE 90S** From 8pm with DJ Dan. Doors open from 2pm

**POUNDED** £5 entry Drinks from a £1 DJ Corey playing chart and dance on whilst Miss Marty and DJ Craig with a pop and cheese on the middle floor  
**NIGHTINGALE CLUB**

**POUNDED SPECIAL** Thurs 28 Jan Your usual great Pounded student club night but with an added surprise  
**NIGHTINGALE CLUB**

**THROWBACK THURSDAY** £1.20 bombs and great music  
**MISSING**

**DROP THE BOMB** start of your weekend £1.50 on all drinks  
**THE VILLAGE INN**

**WEST MIDLANDS**

**2 TILL 2** Open from 2pm till 2am

**THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON**

**DISCO** 7pm-midnight

**NEW FORESTERS, NOTTINGHAM**

**WEST MIDLANDS**

**2 TILL 2** Open from 2pm till 2am

**THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON**

**SIDEWALK**

**SHOT EXCHANGE** Drink

**THE CORE**

**THE CORE**

**THE CORE**

**THE CORE**

**WEST MIDLANDS**

**12.01** with DJ James Levett

**Open from Midnight until 5am with**

**drinks from £1**

**GORGEOUS, WOLVES**

**THE KARAOKE LOUNGE** Free

**Big value drinks With DJ Z**

**THE LION, WALSALL**

**DISCO & DJ** A night of

**THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON**

**WEST MIDLANDS**

**2 TILL 2** Open from 2pm till 2am

**for a quiet drink**

**THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON**

**DISCO** 7pm-midnight

**NEW FORESTERS, NOTTINGHAM**

**WEST MIDLANDS**

**2 TILL 2** Open from 2pm till 2am

**THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON**

# THE BIGGEST GAY MONDAY NIGHT IN THE MIDLANDS!

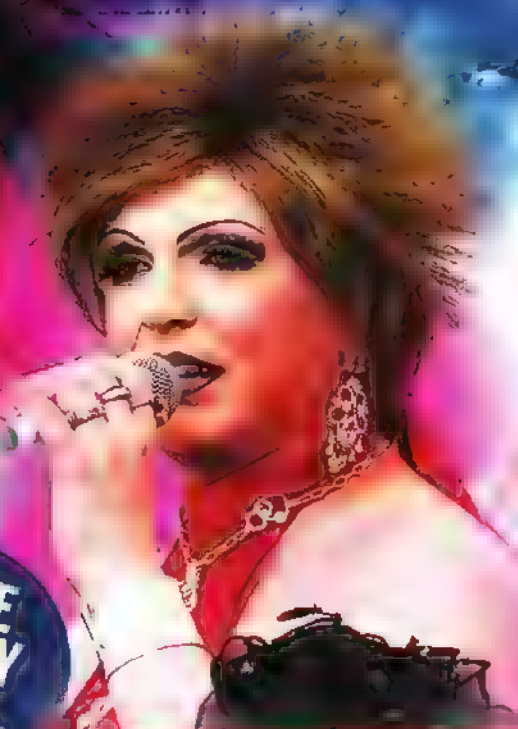


**MON 4<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY**

**SANDRA**

**THE WHORE OF HAMPSTEAD HEATH**

**FREE  
ENTRY  
BEFORE  
MIDNIGHT!**  
10PM-3AM



**MON 1<sup>ST</sup> FEBRUARY**

**MISS PENNY**

# Fabulous

**PLUS: HAPPY HOUR FROM 10PM // DRINKS FROM £1 ALL NIGHT**

## C:21

18-21 ABBEY FOREGATE, SHREWSBURY, SHROPSHIRE SY2 6AE. TEL: 01743 271821 [WWW.C21SHREWSBURY.CO.UK](http://WWW.C21SHREWSBURY.CO.UK)





LOFT LOUNGE

EVEN MORE 2 4 1  
COCKTAILS IN 2016

f loft.birmingham  
 @loftlounge2  
 loftbirmingham  
 0121 622 2444

January



## BIRMINGHAM

**2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS** - Sunday to Friday All day & night. Wind down after work with a cocktail or two

**THE LOFT LOUNGE**

**ALL DAY EVERY DAY PRICES** Du Pann, takes over the weekend by playing the best of club classics, house R&B and all your favourites. Enjoy all day every day prices too

**SIDEWALK**

**BIG GAY FRIDAY** Party anthems all night long with Missing's DJ James. Open until the early hours

**SING STAR SUPERSTAR WITH DISCO & KARAOKE** with Du Nikk

**EDEN BAR**

**FREAKY FRIDAY** Big name cabaret at midnight. Open until 6am **Fri 1 Jan** Miss Penny **Fri 8 Jan** Topsy Redfern **Fri 15 Jan** Tanya Hyde **Fri 22 Jan** Kara Van Park **Fri 29 Jan** Sandra

**THE VILLAGE INN**

**INFUSION** Free Entry. Absolute Anthems and Floor Fillers with DJ Corey. Drinks from £2. Admission £2

**NIGHTINGALE CLUB**

**KICK START** Kick start the weekend from 9pm to the early hours. Hosted by James

**MISSING BAR**

**L8R** With Charlotte the Charlotte. Open until 6am every Friday

**THE VILLAGE INN**

**MIDSBARS - Fri 15 Jan** - Monthly meet up and social group for Bears and Admirers with special drinks offers all night

**MYRA DUBOIS - Fri 15 Jan** - Live cabaret with the one and only Myra Dubois. A great way to spend a Saturday night with great company

**EDEN BAR**

**OLD SKOOL GARAGE** The first Friday of the month sees the Nightingale go back in time, playing some of the best in old skool garage. A night not to be missed

**NIGHTINGALE CLUB**

**SAATHI - Fri 29 Jan** - Every last Friday monthly. South Asian Gay and Lesbian club night. Bollywood and Bhangra

**NIGHTINGALE CLUB**

**SING STAR SUPERSTAR** with Du Nikk every Friday - your chance to win cash

**EDEN BAR**

**VINTAGE FRIDAYS** a night of soul, funk, rock, motown. Northern Soul and all the classic favourites

**THE LOFT LOUNGE**

**XXL - Fri 15 Jan** - Men only night with Du Christian M. Early Bear offers until 11pm. Every 3rd Friday of each month

## THE CORE CLUBS

**FUNK'D UP**

**CLUB CHIC**

**KARAOKE**

**THE FOX**

**RETRO FRIDAY**

**BAR JESTER**

## WEST MIDLANDS

**YOLO!** Gorgeous residents spinning house and classics. Earlybird drinks from £1.50 with free entry before 11pm. 10.30pm - 5.30am

**GORGEOUS CLUB, WOLVERHAMPTON**

**BANG**

1pm

**THE LION, WALBALL**

**TV PARTY NIGHT** A.M.

10pm

**THE GREENHOUSE, DARLSTON**

**CLUB NIGHT**

**THE THREE FURNACES, TELFORD**

**PAUL DUFFY ATLANTIC**

10pm

Day open 9pm-3am

**RAINBOWS, COVENTRY**

**FRIDAY SOCIAL** with Du Paul Giff & guests

**THE BELL, STOURBRIDGE**

**WEEKLY CABARET** with Du Skye. Cabaret at 12.30am. Open late

**THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON**

**START THE WEEKEND**

10pm

casare show room

**PINK, STOKE ON TRENT**

10pm

**TEI FRIDAY** A fun and funky mix

10pm

through to

10pm

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THANKS FOR AN AMAZING 2015  
**BIG THINGS COMING FOR 2016**

**JOEY ESSEX**

**PARRY GLASSPOOL**

**KEEPING WOLVERHAMPTON OUT!**

FOR MORE INFO VISIT

**[WWW.GORGEOUSCLUB.CO.UK](http://WWW.GORGEOUSCLUB.CO.UK)**

GORGEOUS CLUB | SCHOOL STREET | WOLVERHAMPTON | WV1 4LF | 01902 771122



**BIRMINGHAM**

**80S HITS** with DJ Dan from 2am  
it's back to the 80s  
**EDEN BAR**

**THE ATTIC** Available for hire. Call  
the venue for more info 0121 622  
4256  
**EDEN BAR**

**BIG SATURDAY NIGHT OUT** Over 2  
floors. 3 DJs. Open til 8am. With  
DJ Lotty & DJ Richard Moon. With  
DJ Tonic in The Village  
Underground  
**THE VILLAGE INN**

**BIG SATURDAY NIGHT OUT** Every  
Saturday with loads of drinks pro-  
motions  
**NIGHTINGALE CLUB**

**CULT** Bringing dirty house back  
home. Top Floor from 10pm  
**NIGHTINGALE CLUB**

**KARAOKE & COCKTAILS** in The  
Attic, plus music from across the  
decades  
**EDEN BAR**

**L8R** With Charlotte the Harlotte  
Open until 8am every Saturday  
**THE VILLAGE INN**

**LA VOIX - Sat 9 Jan** Live cabaret  
with the amazing La Voix star of  
stage and screen and semi-finalist  
in TV's hit talent show Britain's

Got Talent  
**EDEN BAR**

**MARY MAC - Sat 30 Jan** -  
Scotland's favourite drag queen  
returns to Birmingham for a night  
of fun and frolics! A night not to be  
missed!  
**EDEN BAR**

**NYE RE-RUN - Sat 30 Jan** - If you  
enjoyed New Year's Eve, then do it  
all over again! Featuring popular  
London club night Sink the Pink  
and a live PA from The Aqua  
Experience, plus your hosts the  
Housewives of Birmingham  
**NIGHTINGALE CLUB**

**YOUR DISCO  
NEEDS YOU** fea-  
turing the biggest  
remixes, absolute  
anthems, dance  
classics, disco  
house and com-  
mercials with your  
host Twiggy  
**EDEN BAR**



**SATURDAY SESSIONS** With  
DJ Simon Baker from 8pm  
**THE LOFT LOUNGE**

**SATURS-FACTION** Welcome in the  
weekend with resident DJ, playing  
the best of everything  
**SIDEWALK**

**SWAGGERLICIOUS** Every Saturday

night (Room 4),  
**NIGHTINGALE CLUB**

**THE BREAKFAST CLUB** Every

**CLUB CHIC**

**FABULOUS SATURDAYS** Get the

**THE CORE CLUB**

**THE CORE CLUB**

**THE CORE CLUB**

**DJ PARTY NIGHT** Open

**THE FOX**

**JUST SAYED**

**BAR JESTER**

**KARAOKE** Every Sat nig

**THE WELLINGTON**

**WEST MIDLANDS**

**SLAG** 10pm-6am. Earlybird drinks  
from £1.50. DJ Paul Bryant, James  
Levett & Josh B. Plus weekly  
guests  
**GORGEOUS, WOLVERHAMPTON**

**GORGEOUS, WOLVERHAMPTON**

**BIG NIGHT OUT** E

**THE LION, WALSHALL**

**CLUB NIGHT** Drink promos unt  
11.45. Free entry before 11pm  
**THE THREE FURNACES, TELFORD**

**BIG SATURDAY NIGHT OUT** Ch

**RAINBOWS, COVENTRY**

**INCLUSION** with

**THE BELL, STOURBRIDGE**

**NOT TO MISS** Free

**PINK, STOKE ON TRENT**

**WEEKLY CABARET** with Du

**THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON**

**EAST MIDLANDS**

**BIG WEEKEND PARTY NIGHT** 10pm  
til 6am. Free entry before 11pm. £3  
before 1am and £5 after. The  
**BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON**

**CLUB NIGHT** W

**HEL SINK, LEICESTER**

**BIRMINGHAM**

**2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS** Sunday to  
Friday. All day & night. Wind down  
after work with a cocktail or two  
**THE LOFT LOUNGE**

**BIG STAR SUPERSTAR WITH DISCO  
& KARAOKE** with DJ Nikki. Every  
Sunday  
**EDEN BAR**

**LOCAL CABARET** with Charlotte  
the Harlotte. Showcasing the best  
of the Midlands cabaret circuit  
every Sunday  
**THE VILLAGE INN**

**MIS PENNY'S SUPER SIZE SUNDAYS**  
Cabaret every Sunday hosted by  
the one and only Mis Penny on  
stage at 8.30pm and 10.30pm  
**EDEN BAR**

**SUNDAY BREAKFAST** The perfect  
hangover cure from 9am. Just  
£7.95. Carvery from 12noon for  
just £9.95  
**THE LOFT LOUNGE**

**SUPER SUNDAY DINNER**

**SIDEWALK**

**SIDEWALK**

**CHILL OUT**

**THE FOX**

**SUNDAY IS FUNDAY** with Baby G.  
Happy hour only. 10pm-12am  
**BAR JESTER**

**THREE COURSE LUNCH** only £  
**THE WELLINGTON**

**WEST MIDLANDS**

**MARTY'S PARTY** 9pm-4am. Fun &  
Games, karaoke, prizes and all  
round mayhem. Drinks from £2  
**GORGEOUS, WOLVERHAMPTON**

**CHILL OUT**  
**RAINBOWS, COVENTRY**

**THE PARTY LOUNGE** Relax on a  
Drag host and party  
**EDEN BAR**

**LION BAR & CLUB, WALSHALL**

**KARAOKE & DJ** A night  
**THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON**

**RANDOM PARTY NIGHT** Open

**THREE FURNACES, TELFORD**

**EAST MIDLANDS**

**BRUNCH CLUB** Brunch for £5 with

**RAINBOW & DOVE, LEICESTER**

**SIDEWALK HOLLYWOOD HOMOS NEW YEARS EVE**  
8pm - late

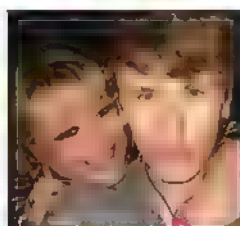
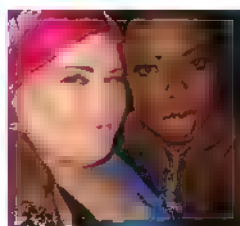
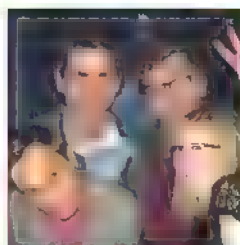
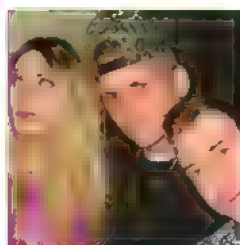
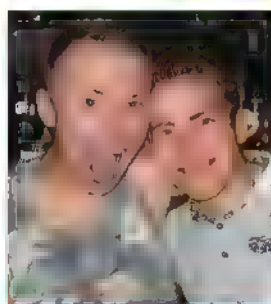
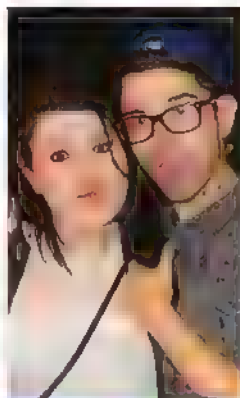
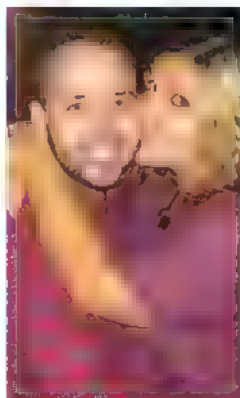
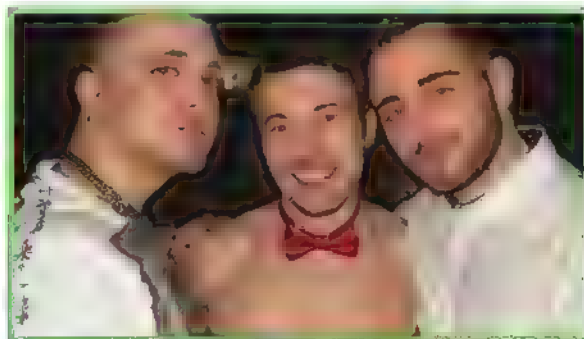
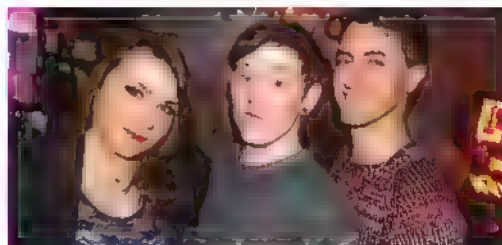
Red carpet & champagne arrival  
DJ - Free Entry - Cheap Drinks!

**SIDEWALK**  
BAR & RESTAURANT

www.donaldsbar.com  
www.donaldsbar.com  
www.donaldsbar.com

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# The Boston: A great night out in Northampton!



**THE BOSTON**  
PRESENTS  
**NYE**  
*Party*  
**2016**

facebook

HOST & CABARET FROM  
**CANDY C**

CHAMPAGNE FROM EZO BTL

THU 31ST DEC | 9PM - 6AM

FREE ENTRY U4 9PM | £6 AFTER 9PM | £10 AFTER MIDNIGHT



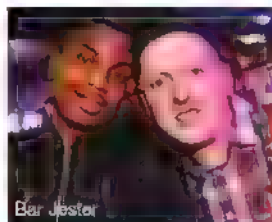
# Out and about around **Birmingham's Gay Village...**



Sidewalk



The Fox



Bar Jester



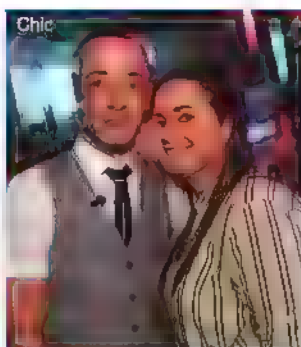
Sidewalk

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[facebook.com/midlandszone.co.uk/](https://www.facebook.com/midlandszone.co.uk/)



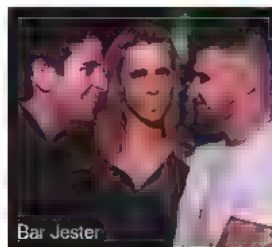
Chic



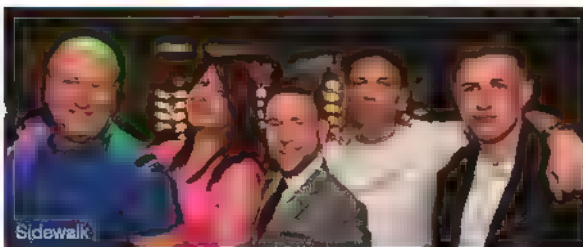
Chic



Sidewalk



Bar Jester



Sidewalk



Chic

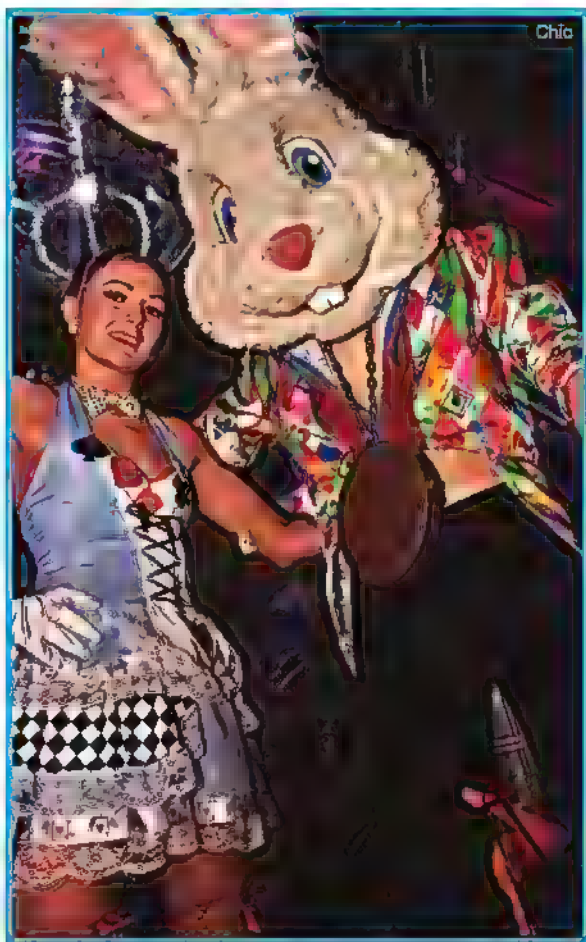
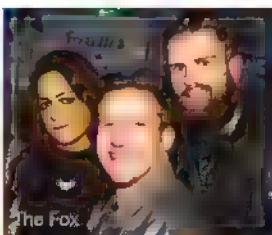
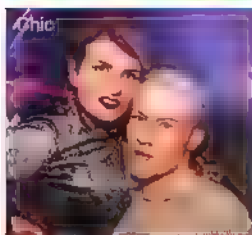
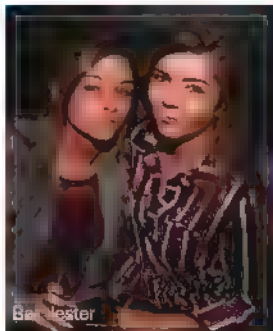
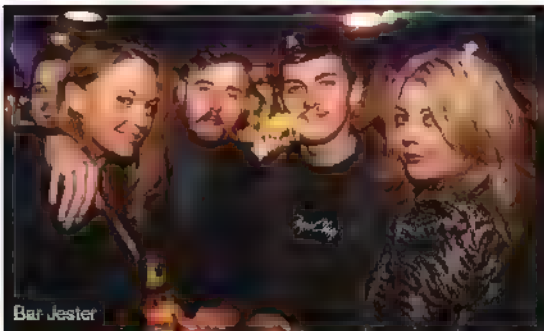
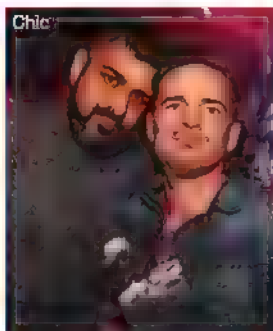
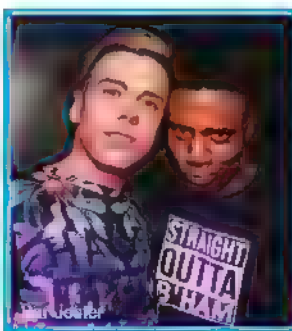


The Fox



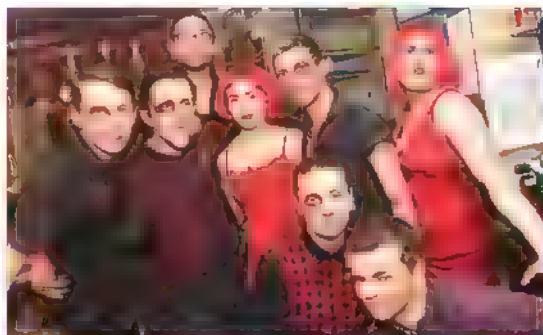
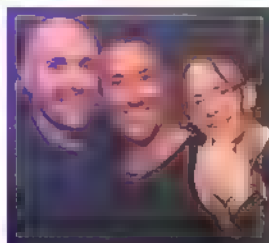
Bar Jester

Images by Laura Byrne & Antony Collins

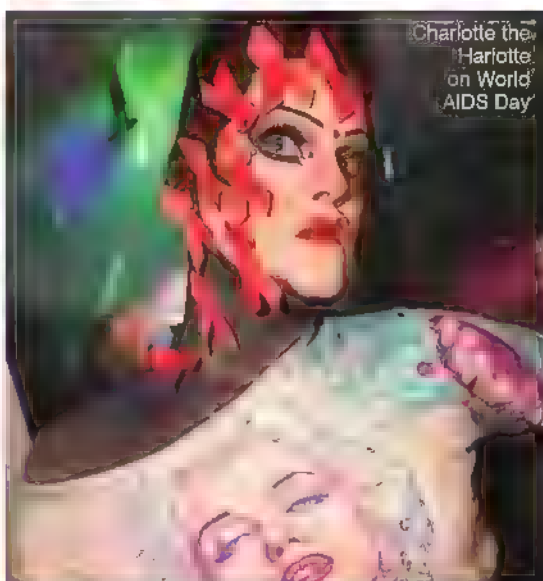
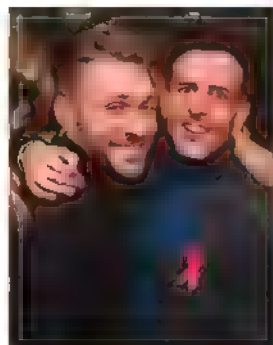
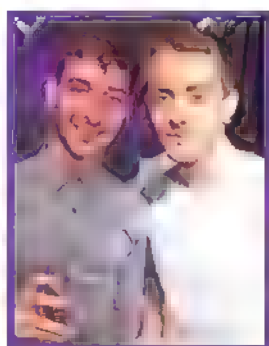




# Party with your pals at Birmingham's **Village Inn!**



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facebook.com/m.d.andzone.co.uk



# THE VILLAGE INN

*January*



*Miss Penny*  
FRIDAY 1ST



*Topsie Redfern*  
FRIDAY 8TH



*Taaya Hyde*  
FRIDAY 15TH



*Kara Van Park*  
FRIDAY 22ND

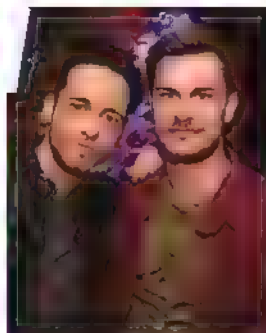
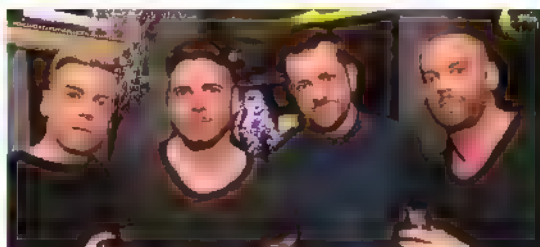
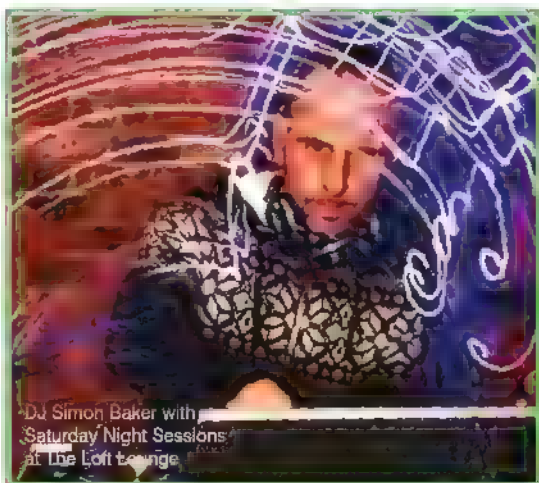


*Sandra*

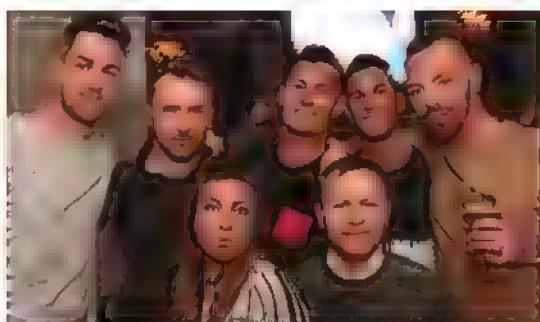
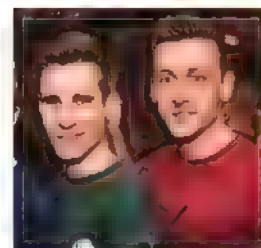
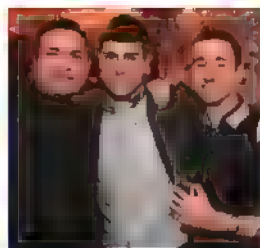
LAST FRIDAY OF EVERY MONTH



# Saturday nights are just right at **The Loft Lounge**



More great photos on **facebook**



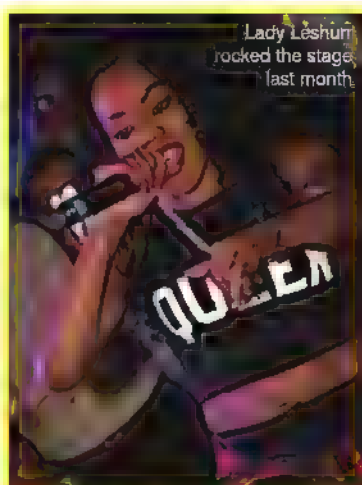
Pictures by **Laura Byrne**



# Lady Leshurr rocks Brum's Nightingale Club

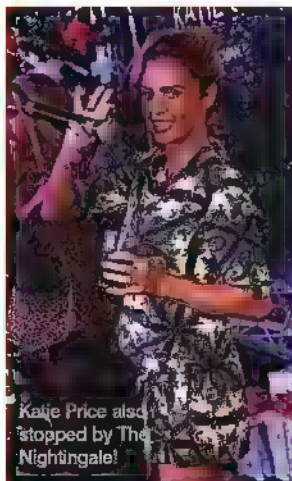
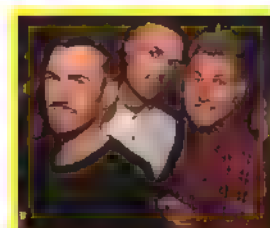
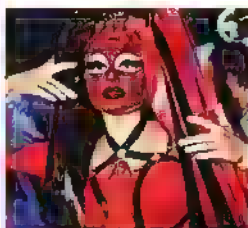
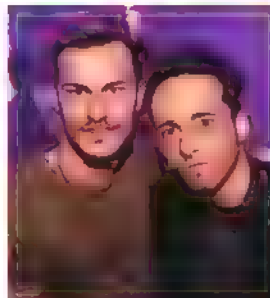


Crowds go wild for Lady Leshurr

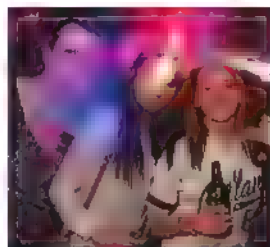
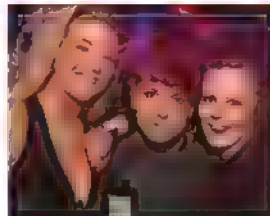
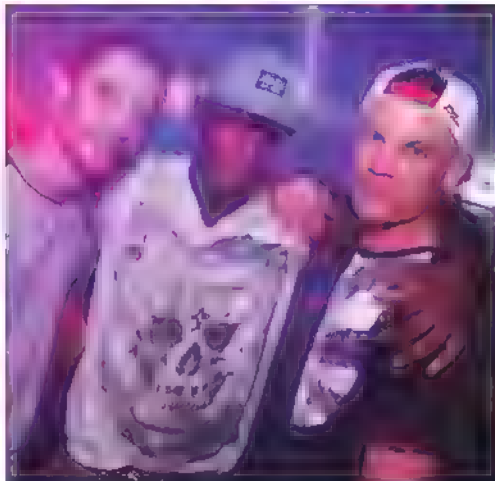


Lady Leshurr rocked the stage last month

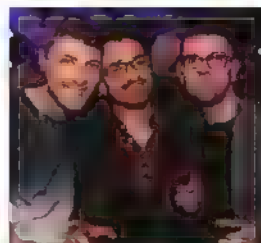
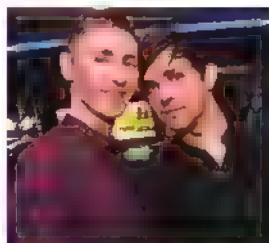
More great photos on facebook



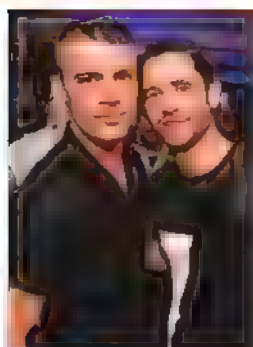
Katie Price also stopped by The Nightingale!



# There's cabaret fun to be had at Brum's **Eden Bar!**



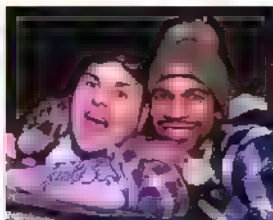
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facebook.com/m.dlandszone.co.uk



Pictures by Laura Byrne



# Missing: A great night out to be had in Birmingham



# HAPPY NEW YEAR

**THURS 31ST  
FREE ENTRY  
NEW YEAR'S EVE  
PARTY!  
& DJ DAN  
& DJ NIKKI**



**JANUARY** Open from 2pm every day.

**SAT 9TH  
LA VOIX**

**FRI 15TH  
MYRA  
DUBOIS**

**SAT 30TH  
MARY  
MAC**

**EVERY THURS EVERY FRI & SUN**

**EVERY SAT**



**90s HITS WITH  
DJ DAN**

GREAT ATMOSPHERE



**KARAOKE &  
DISCO DJ NIKKI**

COME ALONG & SING  
WITH A FRIENDLY  
REGULAR CROWD



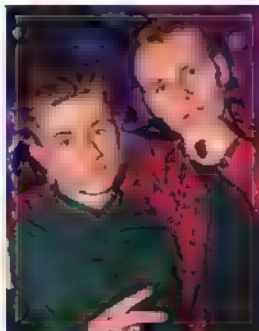
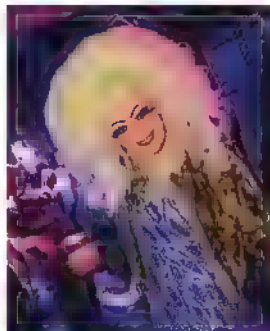
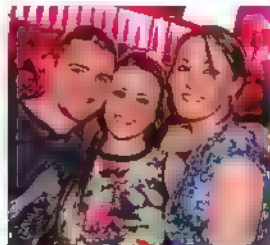
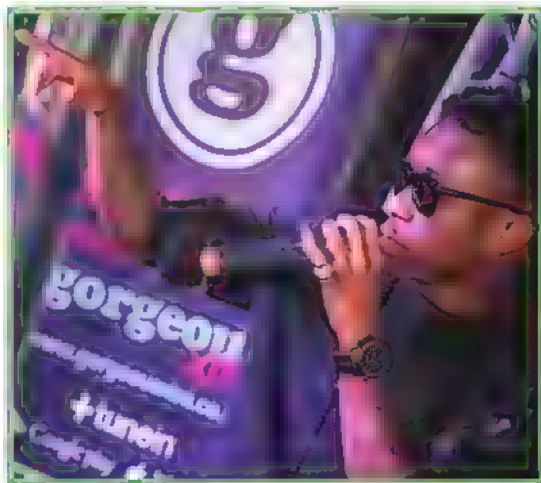
**80s HITS WITH  
DJ DAN**

POP & DANCE TILL 2  
30s FROM 2-4 AM &  
CRAZY DRINK PRICES

116 Sherlock Street Birmingham B5 6NB 0121 622 1953 | [www.theedenbar.co.uk](http://www.theedenbar.co.uk)

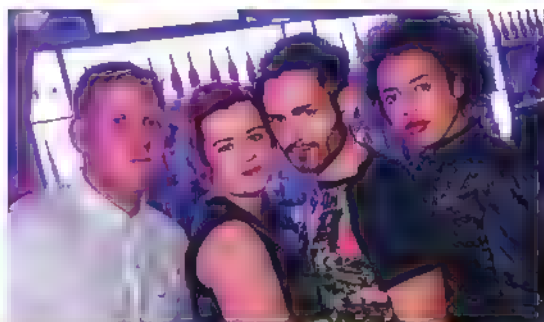
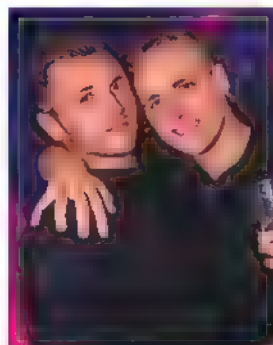
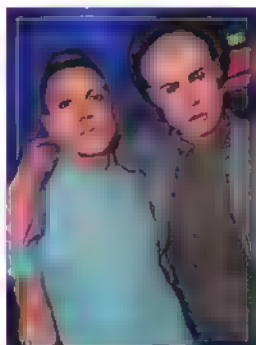


# Gorgeous goes wild for Tinchy Stryder in Wolves!



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[midlandszone.co.uk](#) [midlandszone.com](#)



Click here for [Jonathan Aspinall](#)

## BIRMINGHAM

### BAR JESTER

Holloway Circus  
B1 1EJ  
Tel: 0121 666 8344

### BOLTZ CLUB

Lower Essex St, B5 6QP  
Tel: 0121 666 6888

### CLUB CHIC

28 Horsefear St, B1 1DD  
Tel: 0121 666 6806

### THE CORE

Sherlock St, B5 6NB  
Tel: 0121 622 2797  
www.thecoreclub.co.uk

### EDEN BAR

Sherlock St, B5 6NB  
Tel: 0121 622 1953  
www.theedenbar.co.uk  
1 eden.bar  
See pictures on page 54

### EQUATOR

Hurst St, B5 6SE  
Tel: 0121 622 5077

### FOUNTAIN INN

Wrentham St, B5 6QL  
Tel: 0121 622 1452

### THE FOX

17 Lower Essex St  
B5 6SN Tel: 0121 622 3213

### LOFT LOUNGE

142 Bromsgrove St,  
B5 6RG  
Tel: 0121 6222 444  
www.theloftlounge.co.uk  
1 The Loft Lounge  
See pictures on page 52

### MISSING BAR

Hurst St, B5 6NL  
Tel: 0121 622 4256  
www.missingbar.co.uk  
1 missingbar  
See pictures on page 60

## THE NIGHTINGALE

Kent St, Bham  
B5 6RD  
Tel: 0121 622 1718  
www.nightingaleclub.co.uk  
1 thenightingaleclub  
See pictures on page 53

### RSVP (formerly Queer Street)

Hurst St, B5 6SE  
Tel: 0121 622 2444

### SIDEWALK

Hurst St, B5 6SE  
B1 1EG  
Tel: 0121 622 6222  
www.sidewalkbirmingham.co.uk

### THE VILLAGE INN

Hurst St, Bham  
B5 4BD  
Tel: 0121 622 4742  
www.villageinnbirmingham.co.uk  
1 villageinnbirmingham  
See pictures on page 50

### THE WELLINGTON

72 Bristol St, B5 7AH  
Tel: 0121 622 2592

## West Midlands

### COVENTRY

**RAINBOWS**  
Short St, CV1 2LW  
Tel: 02476 50138

### GLOUCESTER

**THE WESTGATE**  
Westgate Street  
GL1 2NF  
Tel: 01452 690645

### KIDDERMINSTER

**ROYAL EXCHANGE**  
31 New Road, DY10 1AF  
Tel: 01562 228619

## LEEK

**VALIANT**  
3 Stanley Street, ST13 5HG  
Tel: 01538 382812

## SHREWSBURY

**C:21 CLUB**  
Abbey Foregate,  
SY2 6AE  
Tel: 01743 271821  
www.c21bar.co.uk  
1 C21Nightclub

### THE PEACH TREE

21 Abbey Foregate  
Tel: 01743 355055  
www.thepeachtree.co.uk  
1 ThePeachTreeRestaurant

### SPIRIT

22 Abbey Foregate  
SY2 6AE  
Tel: 01743 271821  
www.spiritshrewsbury.co.uk  
1 SpiritShrewsbury

## STOKE-ON-TRENT

**GOSSIP**  
4 Hope Street,  
ST1 5BT  
Tel: 01782 204957

**PINK**  
93 Stafford Street,  
ST1 1LS Tel: 01782 272772

## STOURBRIDGE

**THE BELL**  
20 Market St, DY8 1AG  
Tel: 01826 518478

## STRATFORD upon AVON

**NO7**  
Proud Crowd, 1st Mon  
monthly 7 Windsor St  
Tel: 07787 642510

## TELFORD

**THREE FURNACES**  
30 Bdngrn Rd,  
Madley TF7 4JB  
Tel: 01952 588521

## WALSALL

**THE LION**  
Essex St  
WS2 8NG  
Tel: 01922 612221

### THE RED LION

Park St, W1 1NW  
Tel: 01922 612221

## WOLVERHAMPTON

**BOND STREET TAVERN**  
14 Bond St, WV2 4AS  
Tel: 07825 305050

### GORGEOUS

Schofield St, WV1 4LF  
Tel: 01902 427247  
1 gorgeousbar

### THE WHITE HART

Worcester St  
WV2 4LQ  
Tel: 01902 427598

## WORCESTER

**THE FLAG**  
50 Lowesmoor  
WR1 2SG  
Tel: 01905 780467

### VELVET CLUB

Ance Row  
WR1 3GN  
Tel: 01905 20219

## East Midlands

### DERBY

**THE CROWN INN**  
40 Curzon St  
DE1 1LL  
Tel: 01332 381742

## LEICESTER

**DOVER CASTLE**  
34 Dover St, LE16PT  
Tel: 0116 255 3052

### HELSENKI

94 Rutland St, LE1 1SB  
Tel: 0116 254 7568

### RAINBOW & DOVE

185 Charles St, LE1 1LA  
Tel: 0116 254 7568

### SLOANES

35 New Walk, LE1 6RL  
Tel: 0116 255 2220

### VENOM

{YOLD} Gay every Wed  
Belgrave Gate, LE1 3GR  
Tel: 0116 251 7986

## NORTHAMPTON

### THE BOSTON

Coyle St, NN1 2QP  
Tel: 01604 604404

## NOTTINGHAM

**NEW FORESTERS**  
St Ann's St, NG1 3LX  
Tel: 0115 958 0432

### THE NEWMARKET INN

38 Lower Parliament  
Street, NG1 3BA Gay  
Friendly

### NG1 CLUB

76-80 Lower Parliament  
St, NG1 1EH  
Tel: 0115 958 8440

### PROPAGANDA

8 Broadway, NG1 1PS  
0115 979 9183

**BARS & CLUBS  
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ARE HIGHLIGHTED**

### IN BLACK

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**01743 281714**  
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REGIONAL GAY MAGAZINE**

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the sales team  
on **01743 281711**



## Age Groups

**ACE** A Choir of Equality Meets every Thursday 5.30pm Tel: 01532 42542

**ACTING OUT** An acting group for the LGBT community near to anyone's contact info: [actingout@hotmail.com](mailto:actingout@hotmail.com) or visit [www.actingout.org.uk](http://www.actingout.org.uk)

**ARTPRIDE** Art group Contact: [beyondborders@hotmail.com](mailto:beyondborders@hotmail.com)

**BARDS & BOOKS** Reading group. Every 1st Monday. Contact: [aubt@bt.com](mailto:aubt@bt.com), Bham, e: [hazshonshon@hotmail.com](mailto:hazshonshon@hotmail.com)

**BGO** Birmingham Gay Symphony Orchestra. Contact info: [bgo.org.uk](mailto:bgo.org.uk) or visit [www.bgo.org.uk](http://www.bgo.org.uk)

**DUDLEY LIBRARY LGBT READING GROUP** 1st Friday of Every Month. Tel: 0121 254 0500

**GAPP** Gay and Performing Artists. Birmingham. Call Mike 01532 550191

**LEICESTER POETRY OPEN MIKE NIGHT** Meets 1st Tues monthly at The Red Tent. Tel: Bibo 0116 764081

**LEICESTERSHIRE RAINBOW VOICES** LGBT choir. Meets every Tues in Leicester. Call: Chris on 07740 855248

**LGBT READING GROUP** Every 1st Wednesday monthly. Tel: 01532 42542

**JOURNEY FILM GROUP** LGBT Film group meets every 1st & 3rd Tuesday monthly. [www.journeyfilmclub.co.uk](http://www.journeyfilmclub.co.uk)

**RAINBOW SPIRIT** Creative artists for gay men. Call John 0116 411206

**RAINBOW VOICES** LGBT choir. Call Catherine 01532 624144 or Steven 01532 624144

**SMITHSTON LIBRARY LGBT** Reading group. 1st Monday monthly @ 5.45pm. Tel: 01532 42542

**UNTOLD STORIES** LGBT history project. Leicestershire & Rutland e: [untoldstories@leicestershire.gov.uk](mailto:untoldstories@leicestershire.gov.uk)

**WALSALL LGBT BOOK CLUB** 1st sat monthly. 11am. Walsall Central Library. Contact: [walld@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:walld@walsall.gov.uk)

## LGBT Social

**ALLSOONS** Group for young adults. 18+ LGBT Centre, Leicester. Call: Paul Fisher. 0116 254 7412

**ANOTHER WAY** LGBT Social group meets in Walsall every Saturday. 12-2pm. Village Hub, Cadmore, Walsall. Tel: 01745 942299

**BROTHERHOOD** Group for anyone transitioning from Female to Male (18+). LGBT Centre, Leicester. Call: Dennis 0116 254 7412

**BRUM IN GROUP** Meets on

the 2nd Tuesday of every month at 7.30pm at the HGL drop in. Tel: 07532 301111

**BRUM DINNER** Meets at a different restaurant each month. e: [brumdinner@bt.com](mailto:brumdinner@bt.com)

**CORBY LGBT NETWORK** Friendship, socialising and information. 1st & 3rd Sat monthly 7.30pm. [www.corbylgbt.co.uk](http://www.corbylgbt.co.uk)

**COVENTRY LADS** Social group. 1st & 3rd Sat monthly. Tel: 01273 229292

**DE MONTFORT LGBT SOCIETY** Based in Leicester. [www.dmlgbt.co.uk](http://www.dmlgbt.co.uk)

**DERBYSHIRE CC Employee Network** [derbyshircc@bt.com](mailto:derbyshircc@bt.com)

**DERBYSHIRE REACHOUT** Men's social group. Tel: 01332 207704

**DOSTI** South Asian men's 1st & 3rd Tuesday. Call 0116 254 147

**DUDLEY GAY & BISEXUAL MEN'S SOCIAL SCENE GROUP** 2nd sat monthly. Free buffet lunch provided. Call Matt 0121 254 2424

**THE EDWARD CARPENTER COMMUNITY OF GAY MEN** Call 0116 251121

**EVERGREEN LGBT Social Group** in Bham. Tel: 07749 412289

**FAN LGBT Social Events** 1st & 3rd Sat. 11.15. [www.fanlgbt.co.uk](http://www.fanlgbt.co.uk)

**RAY CLASSIC CAR GROUP** Call Simon on 0121 565 4166

**GAYMEZ** LGBT Games Night in Walsall. 1st & 3rd Sat monthly. 7.30pm. Tel: 01922 42542

**GLoucestershire Gay & Lesbian Community** Social group meets every 2nd & 4th Sat. Tel: 01292 254123

**HEREFORD LGBT** Gay Men's group in The Heart Centre, Grafton Street, Hereford. Tel: 01432 254123

**HIGH 5 GROUP** Social group for men attracted by men in leathers. Tel: 0116 254 1137

**IME Group** for BME LGBT. 1st & 3rd Sat monthly. Tel: 0116 254123

**LADS CAFE** Walsall. 1st & 3rd Sat monthly. Tel: 01922 221410

**LADS CAFE** Walsall. 1st & 3rd Sat monthly. Tel: 01922 221410

**LAVINARD MOVEMENT** Planting flowers for all to enjoy. Meet every Tues. e: [thelavardmovement@gmail.com](mailto:thelavardmovement@gmail.com)

**LEICESTER GAY GROUP** Call: Pete on 0116 251 8138

**LEICESTER LGBT CENTRE CAFE** Leicester. Call: 0116 254 7412

**LGBT PARENTS** Network for LGBT parents.

[www.lgbtparents.net](http://www.lgbtparents.net)  
**LGBT SHREWSBURY** What's happening in Shrewsbury. [www.shrewsburylgbt.co.uk](http://www.shrewsburylgbt.co.uk)

**LGBT STAFFORDSHIRE** Stoke on Trent. Meets every Wed at The Observatory. Tel: 01922 446 1100

**NOTTINGHAM BREAKOUT** Meets every Tuesday from 7.30pm. Tel: 0115 254 1100

**NUBIAN RAINBOW** Conversation night. LGBT people in the community. West Midlands social. Tel: 0121 446 1086

**OUT EVERYWHERE** Bringing people together since 1995. Call 08450 060050

**PINK SOU'WESTERS** Group. Offers non-scene social events and activities. Call 0121 254 1100

**QUEZ NIGHT** 1st Wednesday monthly 7pm @ Gorgeous. Tel: 01902 425092

**SANDWELL Gay & Bisexual Men's Social** 1st & 3rd Sat monthly. Free buffet lunch provided. Call Matt 0121 254 2424

**SHREWSBURY CHILL OUT MONDAYS** 1st Mon monthly at The Market. Tel: 01902 425092

**SOUTH ASIAN'S LGBT** Finding A Voice. Social Group in Birmingham. Meet once a month at Bham LGBT Centre. Call 0121 254 1100

**THIRD WAY** Social Group for BME LGBT. 1st & 3rd Sat monthly. Tel: 01902 425092

**TRUE COLOURS** Derby based BME LGBT Social group. Call 01332 254123

**WAGS** Walsall Activities. 1st & 3rd Sat monthly. Tel: 01922 254123

**WARWICK PRIDE** Social Society. Organises events. Tel: 01922 254123

**WORCESTER LGBT NETWORK** [www.worcesterlgbt.co.uk](http://www.worcesterlgbt.co.uk)

**WS-MIDLANDS LGBT** Social group. Every 1st Tues monthly 7.30pm in Walsall. Tel: 01922 254123

**WALSALL LGBT** Social group. 1st & 3rd Sat monthly. Tel: 01922 254123

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**MEN'S DISCUSSION FORUM** A safe place for black men to discuss issues that affect their lives. Call 0121 446 1100

**GAY BIRMINGHAM** REMEMBERED LGBT history. 1st & 3rd Sat monthly. Tel: 0121 254 1100

**LEICESTER LGBT & T CENTRE** 1st & 3rd Sat monthly. Tel: 01532 42542

**LGBT WOLVERHAMPTON** To raise and develop the profile of the Wolves LGBT community. Tel: 01902 425092

**MIDLANDS LGBT EMPLOYEES NETWORK** Call 0121 254 1100

**NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE** Gay Men's Group. Call 01922 254123

**PINK SHIELD** Working to make Birmingham a safer place for LGBT. Tel: 0121 254 1100

**PRISM** A forum for LGBT. 1st & 3rd Sat monthly. Tel: 0121 254 1100

**RAINBOW HERITAGE** 1st & 3rd Sat monthly. Tel: 0115 934 9529

**TRADE SEXUAL HEALTH** Health events for professionals and the community. Tel: 0116 254 1747

## Mature Groups

**EMBRACE** Group for gay and bi men in Coventry. 1st & 3rd Sat monthly. Tel: 0121 254 1100

**GREYPRIDE** Leicester. 1st & 3rd Sat monthly. Tel: 01532 42542

**LADS LUNCH** Monthly lunch for mature gay & bisexual men in Walsall. Tel: 01922 254123

**LGBT 50+** South Staffs social group for people 50+. Tel: 01922 254123

**MATURE GAY GROUP** Meets in Walsall every Friday. 11am-1pm. Call: Trevor on 01799 81640

**MATURE GAY MEN** For older gay men. Call: Tim or Paul on 0146 254 1100

**OLDER LADS CAFE** Weekly group for mature gay & bisexual men in Walsall. Tel: 01922 254123

**OLD LADS** 1st & 3rd Sat monthly. Tel: 01922 254123

**STOKE OLDER PERSONS GROUP** Social group for mature LGBT. Tel: 01782 266998

**WALSALL LGBT** Social group. 1st & 3rd Sat monthly. Tel: 01922 254123

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**BIRMINGHAM BUDDHIST CENTRE** Meditation group in classes. Tel: 0121 449 1211

**BIRMINGHAM L G C M** 1st & 3rd Sat monthly. Tel: 0121 254 1100

**CHANGING ATTITUDE** Contact: The Red Tent. Tel: 0116 254 1100

**DERBY QUEST** 1st & 3rd Sat monthly. Tel: 0121 254 1100

**JOURNEY METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH** Birmingham. Tel: 0121 454 4406

**LEICESTER GAY CATHOLICS** A group for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people. Tel: 07905 421915

**LESBIAN & GAY CHRISTIANS** 1st & 3rd Sat monthly. Tel: 0121 453 1259

**QUAKER** 1st & 3rd Sat monthly. Tel: 0121 254 1100

**STAFFORDSHIRE LESBIAN AND GAY CHRISTIANS** 1st & 3rd Sat monthly. Tel: 01922 254123

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**MIDLANDS OUT BADMINTON** Birmingham. Call Andy on 0121 346 1522

**MOSLEY SHOALS** Birmingham. Call Andy on 0121 346 1522

**NOTTINGHAM BALL BOYS** Gay football team. Tel: 0115 254 1100

**OUTDOORLADS** Outdoor pursuits group for gay lads. Tel: 0121 254 1100

**STOKE PANTHERS** BADMINTON, SQUASH CLUB. Call Andy on 01782 266998

**WOLVES WALKERS** Tel: 01902 425092

**WOLVES WARRIORS** Football Club. Tel: 01902 425092

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**DO YOU NEED TO GIVE YOUR LGBT COMMUNITY GROUP BETTER EXPOSURE?**

Do you need to feature your group? contact Ryan Humphreys. Email: [ryan@midlandszone.co.uk](mailto:ryan@midlandszone.co.uk) or 01743 281722



To get your LGBT Group listed: Call Adrian Parker on 01743 281714

## Buckinghamshire

**OLDER LESBIAN GROUP** for the over 40s meets every 2nd sat at 1.30 in the month at 'The Loft' in Nailston. Tel: 01295 424442

**HUBY'S** Mature Women's Group. Wotton Bassett. Tel: 01295 424442

**PUFFERFRUIT WOMEN** Lesbian, bisexual, non sexual sex & friends for lesbian, bisexual and questioning women of all ages. Meets every 1st & 3rd from 7pm. Tel: 07512 156474

**THE PINK LINK** is a social club for lesbian, bisexual & trans women with a trans support group. Call 01295 424442

**WORCESTER LESBIAN GROUP** Meets twice monthly. Call 01905 211111

## Worcestershire

**1ST OUT YOUTH GROUP** for young people aged 15-18. Tel: 01905 211111

**LEICESTER LGBT** Group. Tel: 01533 211111

**DERBYSHIRE LGBT** Group. Tel: 01332 211111

**GALAXY** Group for lesbian, gay, bi & trans youth. Tel: 01533 211111

**OUT EAST** Group for young people aged 18 and above. Tel: 01533 211111

**HINT** Group for young people aged 18 and above. Tel: 01533 211111

**INSIDE OUT** (Sandwell). A youth club for LGBT and questioning young people and their friends. Tel: 0845 352 1276

**OUTBURST** Nottingham. Support group for LGBT young people. Tel: 0115 952 5040

**OUT CENTRAL LGBT** youth group for young people aged 16 and over. Tel: 0115 952 5040

**OUT EAST** youth group based in Sutton Coldfield. Tel: 07795 611761

**PRISM LGBT** support group for young people in Coventry. Tel: 02476 714199

**SHOUT** Sandwell. An LGBT youth steering group for young people. Tel: 0845 352 1276

**SPACE LGBT YOUTH GROUP** A group for young people aged 13 to 21. Tel: 01543 411413

**SPECTRUM - YOUNG LGBT SOCIAL GROUP** Leicestershire Group offering social activities for young LGBT people. Call 01533 211111

**UNIQUE** Group for young LGBT people. Meet twice monthly on Sundays. Call Matt or Justin 01384 243220

**X2Y Group** for young people aged 16 and over. Tel: 01533 211111

**YOUTH LGBT** group for young people aged 16 and over. Tel: 01533 211111

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## LIV AID Helplines

**ABPLUS** A Charity supporting transsexual living with and without HIV. Tel: 0121 622 6477

**FRESHWINDS HOUSE** Holistic care and support for people with HIV. Tel: 0121 415 6000

**HEALTHY GAY LIFE - BIRMINGHAM** Free confidential service working with Gay. Tel: 0121 440 6161

**LEICESTERSHIRE AIDS SUPPORT SERVICES** Tel: 01533 211111

**STAFFORDSHIRE BUDDIES** Support group for people living with or affected by HIV. Tel: 0121 251 2511

**SUMMIT HOUSE SUPPORT** Practical support and confidential advice around HIV. Tel: 0121 251 2511

**TERENCE HIGGINS TRUST** Offer a range of services for those affected and affected by HIV and STIs. Tel: 0121 604 6444

**TRADE SEXUAL HEALTH** Offers a range of confidential sexual health services. Tel: 0121 231 2311

**WALSALL GAY MEN'S HEALTH PROJECT** Delivering health and social care services to the LGBT community. Tel: 01902 425092

**WHITALL STREET** A sexual health service located in Birmingham. Tel: 0121 231 2311

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**LGBT STAFFORDSHIRE** Stoke on Trent & North Staffs. Tel: 01782 266998

**NOTTINGHAM LESBIAN & GAY SWITCHBOARD** Tel: 01533 211111

**RAINBOW SUPPORT** Herefordshire. Tel: 01533 211111

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**MEN'S HIV FAST TEST CLINIC** Free 20 minute testing in Nottingham. Tel: 01533 211111

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## CLASSIFIED

### ACCOUNTANTS & LEGAL

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### Splash Spa & Leisure East Midlands Biggest Gay/Bi Sauna

#### BEARS NIGHT 2nd January

(The Bears Night is held on the first  
Saturday of every month)

All day till late, Buffet 7pm (free),  
Bar, Pool table and lots of fun!!!!

Bear's Lair

#### LANA & GEMMA PRESENT ENCOUNTERS

FOR T-GIRLS & THEIR FRIENDS

Wednesday 27th  
January

Entrance costs £10 (£1 discount if  
you are dressed/dressing)  
8pm till late

#### Jason's Naked Mates Day

Sunday 31st January

12 midday through till 8pm  
Buffet provided

Come along and bare all !!!!

#### NO Towel Tuesdays EVERY TUESDAY

Bar & Coffee | Massive Lounge | Sauna | Steam Room | XL-Hot Tub  
Huge Cinema | Private Rooms | Dark Room | Glory Holes | Slurp Ramp

Splash Spa & Leisure Leicester's Biggest Gay/Bi Sauna

61 Buxford Street, South Leicester LE1 3JR www.splashleisure.co.uk

## SPARTAN

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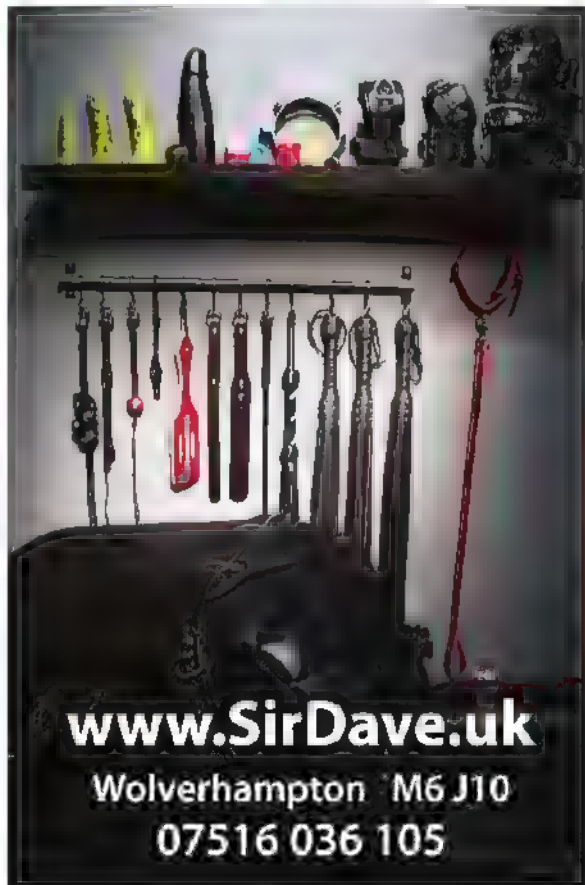
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## THE EDITOR'S NOTE by Ryan Humphreys

### Say "hello" to 2016...

Welcome to the first edition of Midlands Zone in the brand spanking new year that is 2016!

So how did 2015 end for you? Submerged in a veritable snowdrift of turkey sandwiches and mince pies? If so, you'll no doubt be looking ahead to the next few months as the perfect time to say farewell to those fast-emerging love handles and become a better all-round version of your self. After all, what are new year's resolutions for if not to encourage a period of self-improvement?

Diana Vickers speaks to us about this month's Rocky Horror Show!



### Summer dreamin'

Not that the next twelve months should be all about being a lean, mean exercising machine; you'll need to take your foot off the pedal from time to time too, not least during the summer months when all manner of magnificent Midlands Pride events will be tempting you to indulge yourself. And with new Prides on the block such as Coventry and Chesterfield now heading into their second year, the region's gay festivals scene is set to be stronger than ever. A tempting proposition indeed, particularly in the still-grim depths of wintertime (albeit, as I write, a bloomin' mild one).

### A site for gay eyes?

We've got our usual packed issue for you this month, but as well as making your way through the pages of this 225th edition of Midlands Zone magazine, be sure to check out our newly redesigned website. We're sure you'll love it every bit as much as we do, but we'd also love to get

your feedback. So if you've got any thoughts or ideas that you feel would make the site even more user-friendly, please do get in touch. In the meantime, settle down with one of your devices, type in [midlandszone.co.uk](http://midlandszone.co.uk) and check out what the boys in our web-design department have been getting up to.

### What a lovely pair!

Things to flag up in this issue include a couple of really interesting interviews. The first is with Diana Vickers, who's set to play Janet in a new touring version of The Rocky Horror Show that's soon to be visiting the region. Diana's great fun and reveals not only why she's excited about Rocky Horror but also what's making her nervous about the show. The second interview is with civil rights campaigner Stuart Milk, the nephew of the late US activist Harvey, no less. Stuart's a truly fascinating fella, and it was a real privilege to chat to him about his forthcoming visit to the Midlands, when he'll be contributing to a National Festival Of LGBT History event in Shrewsbury.



## ON THE BALL

with Steve Ball

### New year. New life.

'Tis the month to make New Year resolutions. Whenever I've asked friends if they've made any, spending less time on social media seems to be a common one. Few have been as forthright as one facebook friend, who posted a screenshot of his Grindr profile with the message, "Deleted. What a crock of shit! It's virtually destroyed gay communication. And turned most guys into self-centred liars".

For the lesbians and low tech amongst us, a word about Grindr. It's an online dating app for gay, bisexual and curious men to hook up. With four million global users in 200 countries and 10,000 new members joining every day, it's become a worldwide phenomenon and an essential accessory for many gay men. It also fulfills a political function by raising awareness about campaigns and provides many guys, particularly in isolated or socially conservative areas, with a rare opportunity to meet others and socialise.

But if match.com is about dating and romance, Grindr is predominantly about quick and accessible casual sex. Nothing wrong with that - except that it does have other consequences. As my facebook friend suggests, many gay men are choosing to stay home and, er, Grind, rather than venture out onto our increasingly quiet gay scene. And many of those who do visit bars and clubs seem to be trapped in an endless cycle of picture scrolling and finger tapping, presumably in a relentless search for the next hook-up. The danger is that apps like Grindr, designed to bring us closer together, are in fact replacing any sense of genuine interest and spark with close, quick and convenient anonymous meets. For some, a no-strings brief encounter may be exactly what they're looking for, but for guys seeking a relationship or romance, it's likely to be less satisfying.

Hook-up apps offer a fast-food selection of instant meals. But like many ready meals that may be immediately gratifying, they still leave you feeling unsatisfied. Maybe one New Year resolution is to tell ourselves that in 2016 we deserve something better than a well-designed phone app.





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